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SEMI-MONTHLY

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NOTES

THE IMMORALITY OF REVIEWERS strikes us now as it has struck us any time these ten years whenever a magazine with literary pretensions has fallen into our hands. Time was when, in the innocence of our fresh, young life, we believed that if a man said a book was good, he said so because he thought it was good. Those were the days of full-hearted confidence and simple, artless joys. Women were peerless then, and men were noble; candy was sweet and brought no after-qualms and gum no weariness. Since then the world has battered us. How in the days of goggle-eyed credulity we read "Book Chat," "Literary Talk," and "Among the Books;" how we hung on the lips of "Spectator," "Lounger," "Observer," "Saunterer," and "Critic;" how we filled a bookshelf with the Great American Novel, charming little volumes, and the best work by far that has yet appeared from the author's pen, and how we even harkened unto the words of Laurence Hutton, and laid in a stock of wondrous things (marveling the while at the multiplied coincidence of the Harper imprint)—all these matters are for our secret shame alone. It was years before we understood the true nature of the laudatory evil or appreciated this saccharine degeneration of the reviewer.

MARK, HOWEVER, that the hired assassin of the critical faculty is to be distinguished from the congenital praiser, the eulogist by instinct. The former may be the victim of circumstance—caught young by a publisher, perhaps, and trained in the vice of panegyric, as a child may be trained to steal. Take Laurence Hutton, for instance; who knows what bitterness of heart may lurk beneath his purchased smiles? Willing, and even anxious, to return to an honest calling, a man has, perforce, to consider the daily bread, the little comforts of home, the frugal tea, perhaps the support of an aged relative, and count the cost of giving up his profession. Let us not think too harshly of him if he sticks. And, after all, this type is not the worst. Neither the hired praiser nor the occasional log-roller is altogether hopeless. Often, no doubt, after a hard day's lying, when they breathe again the free, pure air of personal prejudice, they damn quite naturally the things they want to damn.

BUT THE CONGENITAL PRAISER, the man who lisps advertisements in childhood and writes sympathetic reviews in middle age—the invincible enthusiast for mediocrity—there is no hope for him. His praise is the stuff that is forever making gods of tiresome little people and drawing crowds of the unsophisticated to their worship. If it only stopped there! But the worst of it is that it vulgarizes the really good things. He and his like praise the charm clean out of a book. The somewhat attenuated attractions of *Trilby* were obliterated by them completely, and the book came to reek so of idiotic associations that it had to be thrown away. Cheap praise killed poor Du Maurier. He had laid to heart Quintilian's maxim: "He that seemeth a wise man among fools, seemeth a fool among wise men," and perceiving the character of his American clientèle he soon died. Take their reviews of *The Christian*, *The Martian*, *Soldiers of Fortune*, better yet *The Choir Invisible*, and mark their language. When they are summoned before the heavenly throne, will they have at their command any compliments which they have not already addressed to James Lane Allen? They have blasphemously staled all their hallelujahs in advance. Yet if these people are sincere, and we cannot doubt it, it is hard to keep from envying them. Oh for the capacity of feeling all manner of thrills over all kinds of printed things,—of saying Land Sakes! with genuine conviction, and being near to nature's heart. Oh, to be a nice, round, happy baby once again. It makes us feel so old and cynical not to be able to weep at a pathetic intention on the part of an author, or split our sides over a humorous desire. Think of being able to laugh at Glory Quayle's letters, which a reviewer has described as sparklingly and deliciously witty! Even though our heart goes out to the author in his deadly grapple with the humorous, and we feel as if we would gladly do anything in the world to help him, we cannot laugh for him. Yet some laugh merrily. It matters not whether they were literary paretics or belated children, they laughed and they were happy. Life has a zest indeed for such as they.

THE LAUDATORY WHOOP AND THE IMITATIVE GIBBER, purchased or spontaneous, give books their vogue. Strange that libel should be criminal and the law take no note of the inverted libel of false praise. How much worse to rot the brains of the whole community than to blast the reputation of a single member of it. And when one thinks of the myriads of reviews which are paid for and read and the myriads of books which these reviews help to circulate, it makes his heart ache for his countrymen. Truly decadence is the deification of the commonplace, not the thing they call it in France. A great literary stupor has settled down upon the critics in this country, and the current discussions of literature proves that the taste for books

is dead. The undiscriminating have inherited the earth. The remedy? That is a fearful question. Total abstinence from reading might avail in some cases, but the problem has to take into account the vices of the literary temperament—mere temperament without talent—and it is perplexed and complicated. Some deep thoughts rise within us, but they are too serious for publication at this time. The petrified phrase, the momentum of a past success, the psychology of the literary crowd, and the dynamics of imitation, each requires a separate sociological monograph.

THE FORTUNES OF THE THEATER have come to a pretty pass in New York when *A Lady of Quality* and *The French Maid* can take rank among the successes of the season. But deplorable as the triumph of vulgarity may seem, matters will have to grow worse before there is any hope of improvement. The fault lies partly with the public and partly with the great managers, who are ready to thrust any foul mess of pottage down the throats of audiences which crave nothing better. The men who at present control the policy of the best theaters and the most popular stars in this country are for the most part shrewd speculators in dramatic wares, whose Hebraic instincts will not permit them to look for a moment at any goal except that of their immediate personal profit. And since the best interests of the drama can only be consulted by the spending of money without the constant expectation or desire of immediate pecuniary returns—in other words, since our best plays can only be produced by managers who are willing to use the receipts of their more popular productions upon the staging of dramatic works of art which cannot in the nature of things be largely remunerative, except possibly by way of advertisement—it stands to reason that we cannot admit the possibility of public enlightenment as long as popular taste is catered to by a syndicate of Jews, whose knowledge of dramatic values is in inverse ratio to their undoubted financial wisdom.

By far the best of the theatrical ring is the manager of the Lyceum Theatre, a man whose literary taste and great personal charm are only partly discounted by his conservative timidity and limited range of vision. The history of the Lyceum stock company is at least a proof that Mr. Daniel Frohman is not in the theatrical business for pecuniary purposes only. He is the one manager in New York of whom it can be said that he is really in love with his profession. Unfortunately he stands in constant dread of the great Leviathan whose gross appetites he feels himself called upon to satisfy. Not for one moment would he think of thrusting upon the notice of the beast any unwonted fare, however choice its quality. One cannot, for instance, imagine that had *The Second Mrs. Tan-*

quary been first submitted to Mr. Frohman by a nameless author, that he would ever have considered for a moment the possibility of its production. Granted, however, that Mr. Pinero has made a name for himself abroad, the Lyceum manager is wide awake to the fact that the American public must become acquainted with this playwright, not for his genius' sake, but simply because he is notorious.

And if Mr. Frohman would have shied at *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, or *The Benefit of the Doubt*, how much more would he have looked askance at *The Princess and the Butterfly*, the most talkative and the most inconsequential—as far as plot and action are concerned—of all Mr. Pinero's plays. And yet the public must have the latest novelty from London, just as it expects the newest fashion plate from Paris. And so Mr. Frohman, not having sufficient boldness to say point blank to his customers, "You ask for Pinero: well, then, there he is, and how do you like him?" must needs go about to clip the wings of the poor "Butterfly," and having pinned him to the board, and tricked him out in new colors, hold him up for public gaze as who should say, "Pardon the necessity of forcing this dull fly upon your notice. He belongs to a fine genus though you might not believe it, and I have done my best to make him look pretty."

It has indeed reached such a point in America that a manager cannot, or will not, offer to the public what he knows to be a work of art, and takes his stand upon that. He goes between the people and the artist, and must temper the wind to the shorn lamb.

What are we to think of the intelligence of educated theater-goers in our big cities when Mr. Daniel Frohman, the best of our managers, can deliberately say with perfect complacency, "Yes, I have taken *The Princess and the Butterfly*, and cut out just forty-five minutes of dialogue, and the result is that I have procured what is not a very good play, but is, I think you will admit, a very pleasant entertainment." Of course we are accustomed to see the dead dramatists cut to pieces by our Augustin Dalys and Henry Irvings. Even Mr. Joseph Jefferson has tampered with the immortal Sheridan. But Shakespeare and Sheridan are in their graves, and cannot rise in their own defense. When, however, it comes to cutting up the work of a great living playwright, the practice, though morally no more reprehensible than the other, does seem to pass the bounds of all decent courtesy. We have not so many Pineros in our midst that we can afford to dictate to them exactly what they shall write for us. Moreover what must be the feelings of Mr. Arthur Wing Pinero himself, who is more careful of every note of inflection than the celebrated orchestral conductor of whom the Scotch fiddler complained that

he was "that parteeular to half a bar." The question that naturally arises in the mind is whether the English dramatist really knows that his quaint comedy has been butchered to make an American entertainment. He agreed, so we are told, to the omission of one short scene where the modern young man is discovered playing with his dolls; but it can hardly be imagined that he contemplated the wholesale use of the knife which Mr. Frohman has employed in order to get rid of these subtleties of humor which might make the average American playgoer sigh for his oysters at the Waldorf.

Now even supposing for a moment that these changes did really improve the play from every point of view, it is exceedingly doubtful whether the public is not bound in all respect to take from a man of Mr. Pinero's genius what he himself thinks fit to give, but when the fact of the matter is that the charm of *The Princess and the Butterfly* depends largely upon the brilliancy of the dialogue, and the cutting to pieces of the play seriously injures the continuity of the speech and interferes with the proper rounding of the characters, it is impossible to see what excuse can be offered for this method of dealing with our best dramatic offerings. *The Princess and the Butterfly* is not a great play; it lacks dramatic intensity, its characters were sketchy even before Mr. Frohman took the piece in hand, and the general treatment of the plot is conventional, not to say perfunctory. Yet there is about the whole play such a delicious atmosphere of genuine comedy, the humor is in so pleasant a vein and withal of so subtle a nature, and above all so much sunlight is suddenly thrown upon the dark territory which is popularly supposed to lie upon the shady side of forty, that while we exclaim of the characters that they are such things as dreams are made of, we welcome this return to the pure comedy of manners.

As for the New York production it has this one saving grace, that it introduces to us an actress who promises, sooner or later, to take the place of Miss Ada Rehan upon the American stage. It is very seldom that women are imbued with the true spirit of comedy; when they are, their value in the theater is almost priceless. In Miss Julie Opp we have a woman of great personal charm, possessed of a mellow voice and perfect delivery, and above all of an unmistakable intelligence. If she elects to stay in London, where she has an excellent opening and where her talents will be appreciated, we cannot blame her. At the same time it is pleasant to think that if we cannot produce intelligent audiences in this country, we can provide the English stage with intelligent actresses.

Just a word should be said in praise of Miss Mary Mannerling as Fay Zuliani, the part originally created by Miss Fay Davis, another American actress in London. Miss Mannerling enters into the character

with an unexpected vivacity and Southern quickness of passion. If she would only wear a more becoming fancy dress in the third act her performance would be irreproachable.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE to Congress, on the whole, has pretty well satisfied the country, since, if it disappointed the hopes of some people it disappointed the expectations of no one. Mr. McKinley has a moderate taste and ability for literary composition, and his message compared with the clumsy and difficult English of his predecessor might even be called a distinguished effort. Those who believe, as all the foreign students of our complication with Spain do, that no matter how the President may be advised we must drift inevitably into war, have had their judgment much encouraged by the minatory tone of a part of the address. Mr. McKinley does not hesitate to use the word "force," repeatedly. He contemplates armed intervention should the Spanish government retreat from its promises or even fail to bring about the pacification of Cuba by wise legislation. His message is called conservative. In the circumstances perhaps it is conservative. But no one can read the downright denunciation of Spanish rule in Cuba and the very frank threat to go to war in the event of certain not remote contingencies arising, without being impressed by the perils of the situation. The President will attempt to control the unruly elements of Congress. He will control them for a time. In case they slip from the leash he holds a trump card in the revival of Mr. Olney's dictum that the President, not the Congress, is empowered to grant belligerent rights. In one sentence he intimates that he is in complete agreement with Mr. Cleveland's secretary on this point. But Congress has many ways of forcing the hand of the Executive. In Mr. McKinley's case we have reason to believe that pressure would not be long resisted, since it is apparent that he secretly believes war with Spain to be inevitable.

One part of the message carries a rather curious argument. The president is attempting to prove the futility of granting belligerent rights. One of his strongest points is that the grant would make it impossible for the Cuban sympathizers in this country to extend aid to the insurgents. This "aid" of which the President speaks, is offered in violation of our treaty with Spain as well as our domestic law. That the President should base his argument against a recognition of belligerency on the confession that it would prevent us from extending illicit assistance to rebels against a friendly power, is droll to say the least of it. But it shows how indifferent the government is growing to the claim of Spain to be treated as a well-disposed neighbor, and how fragile is the protection of peace against which the war parties on both sides of the Atlantic are beating with the utmost fury.

THE PROTEST AGAINST THE APPOINTMENT of Attorney-General McKenna to the vacancy in the Supreme Court created by the resignation of Justice Field is unusual enough to excite great attention everywhere. It is signed by a judge of the United States Court of Appeals, a federal district judge, and a number of lawyers of high standing at the Oregon bar. One of the subscribers is a former member of General Grant's cabinet, who was himself nominated for a supreme court justiceship, and defeated in the Senate through the intrigues of certain "lady enemies" of his wife. The protest against Mr. McKenna is ascribed to various jealousies. It is said he is assailed because he is a Roman Catholic; again because he refused to hold court in Portland. But the petitioners make no concealment of the fact that they are opposed to his appointment because he is not qualified by temperament or learning for the judicial station. Unfortunately for Mr. McKenna, whether the criticism be correct or otherwise, it is accepted as just by the people of the East, who base their estimate of the man upon his brief career as Attorney-General. He has seemed to those who have been brought in contact with him, a narrow, prejudiced, hair-splitting lawyer of no unusual ability, and his change of opinion on the notorious Section 20 of the tariff bill was enough to make angelic lawyers weep.

THE EVER DELIGHTFUL DEMOCRATIC PARTY—that is, the greater remnant that met in Chicago—is not in the accord that little boys who delight to scratch and bite ought to be if they expect to scratch and bite effectively. Mr. Bryan is still the idol and hero of a majority of the party, and it is said in certain sections of Missouri and Illinois the only art that is considered quite sacred is the lithographs and bas-reliefs of this great tragedian. But with the party leaders it is different—quite. Not one of them is well disposed toward the orgulous chieftain. They would tear him down, but they can't. His mighty frame resists assault. His personal beauty and his superb mastery of gleaming, glowing thoughts have enshrined him in the hearts of the humble. He will be renominated unanimously if the gods do not envy us the possession of such a miracle of excellence. Meanwhile Altgeld, Holcomb, Rogers, Bland, and the other envious souls will continue in their vain attempts to enrage the minds of the revolutionists against him. With all his genius, Mr. Bryan finds it difficult to so arrange his tragedy that all the "issues," the great throbs, shall hold the centre of the stage all the time. He is asked to take his final stand on free coinage, the initiative and referendum, government ownership of railways, election of federal judges, and fifteen or twenty other vital reforms. He is doing as well as could be expected in the circumstances, but he was trapped last week into a confession that he had not taken the time to study the question of government ownership of railways! Study! Does n't he *know*?

THE ACTIVITY OF GERMANY is not so surprising when one considers that the Chinese and Haitian entanglements will be of service when the time comes for the Emperor to renew his demand in the Reichstag for the enlargement of the navy. In China much can be forgiven the Kaiser. While European missionaries in the East are a great nuisance, and are probably the worst dressed people in the world, they really do not deserve butchery, and a government could be engaged in a worse business than defending the lives of its citizens abroad. The manner of the Germans is abrupt, and no doubt the seizure of the Chinese ports was less in the interests of humanity than in the interests of a bold foreign policy. At the same time, only through vigorous retaliation can the Chinese government be convinced that it is rude and unprofitable to permit the murder of white men. A few years ago, when white missionaries and their wives were assassinated by religious fanatics, the Chinese government promised to punish the culprits. Instead of doing so, it tricked the European investigating committee by introducing convicts, under capital sentence for other crimes, as the assassins of the missionaries. It is this sort of thing that makes the European governments take high-handed measures against the Chinese. In Haiti the case is wholly different. The negroes are not an admirable people, and President Sam is a weak imitation of the bloody Hippolyte, whose subordinate and enemy he was, the terms being synonymous in Haiti—and elsewhere. But there is no question that the Haitian government acted within its rights, or that the German chargé was guilty of unpardonable officiousness, or that the indemnity demanded by Germany is ridiculously large. The extreme brusqueness of the German government in this case is a sign of what we may expect if the Emperor's unflagging restlessness should cause him to turn to this continent for new scenes. The Monroe doctrine is a great deal more liable to bring us into conflict with Germany or France than with Great Britain.

WE EXTEND AN INVITATION to our witty contemporary, *Life*, to make public the authorship of the excellent series of cartoons that have been appearing in its pages for the last two months. Cleverer caricatures we have never seen; nor any that, while preserving the likeness, bring out more happily the subject's character by the slight and sober touch of exaggeration which should be, but very rarely is, with our American draughtsmen, the essence of pictorial parody. The sketches are all of well known men—Lord Salisbury, Hall Caine, Dick Croker, Tom Platt, the proprietors of the New York *World* and *Herald*, Van Wyck, and so on—and in each case the incisive result seems to be a summary of the man's whole life and nature. There is a complete history of Tammany to be seen in Croker's face, naked bossism in Platt's, forty years of English pub-

lic life in Salisbury's, the *poseur* and showman in Hall Caine's, and the *World* in Joseph Pulitzer's. The anonymous author of these cartoons has more than good draughtsmanship to recommend him; more, too, than the easy humor of the *salon* which *Life* has made finally its own. He has the very instinct of caricature, the sanity and sense of the permissible, and the quiet ability to suggest without the blatancy of presentation. One's curiosity to know his name is inevitable, but it can be restrained if the price of publication is the discontinuance of the series.

The mention of *Life* brings to mind Mr. C. D. Gibson, and Mr. C. D. Gibson unfortunately brings to mind the fate of all men who trade on their reputation. The last few drawings that he has contributed to *Life* have been almost barbaric in their elemental qualities—great, scrawny performances, unkempt and ragged beyond belief, with one blotch of ink for the girl's face and another for the man's, and trees that look like pieces of twisted molasses candy and belonging to no known species, arranged with more than Japanese perspective. The world of journalism, we may assume, is not peopled with angels, and perhaps it is asking too much of editors to consider an artist's work as of more importance than his popularity. But when a man perpetrates heedlessly inferior drawings simply on the strength of his reputation, we do expect journals of the class of *Life* to put some effective obstacle in his path. In this instance we have been disappointed, and the result does no good to *Life* and still less to Mr. Gibson. That artist, indeed, seems to be passing through a crisis of his fate. It is not his fault if the omnipotent matinee-girl has bestowed on him the same position in art that Mr. Davis has won in fiction and Mr. Sothern on the stage. But he will be very seriously to blame if he acquiesces in his reputation for all time. He has fallen into a rut and he will have to get out of it if he ever wishes to become an artist. You cannot fool all the matinee-girls all the time, as Mr. Sothern has found out. While her favor lasts, she is easy to please; but she has her moments of higher education and is apt to leave her idol suddenly to flounder on as best he can on his native ability. And the last state of such a man is considerably worse than the first.

We do not mean to say that Mr. Gibson has invested his whole stock of talent in the reputation that has come to him. He has still a large reserve which may yet be devoted to art. The precise condition in which he stands has been shown clearly enough by a recent exhibition of his drawings at Keppel's Art Rooms in New York. In these, when he is illustrating Dickens or sketching London life—that is to say, when he escapes from New York and forgets what is expected of him—Mr. Gibson shows himself an artist of exquisite deftness.

delicacy and conscientiously tries to introduce a background now and then and admit the claims of composition and perspective. It may not be really Dickens that he gives us, but it is a very pleasing version of what Dickens ought to have been. In the same way his London types show care and more thoroughness than Mr. Gibson finds it worth his while to cast before his public here; though they fail to represent the London girl as she really is, for the same reasons that makes his portrayal of the American girl so charmingly untrue. Still these outside studies show a serious artistic purpose and evidently provide Mr. Gibson with the impulse that is necessary for his development. But in his American sketches, or most of them, he returns to the slim prettinesses, the little jokes, the posings, starched attitudes, incompleteness, and defiance of harmony and arrangement with which *Life* has familiarized us. The moral is written broadly. Mr. Gibson will never be an artist of any intellectual power or even of any attractive humor. But he may do much graceful work, may even in time give us a picture instead of a number of isolated figures, providing he has the courage to rise above his present unfortunate reputation.

THE IMPRESSION that Dr. Johnson's letter to Lord Chesterfield finally put an end to literary patronage is popular but not quite correct. Patrons we still have among us, though their functions and character have changed. The Maecenas of last century was usually a nobleman who found it useful for social and political reasons to keep literary man among his retainers. Some of them did so from a genuine love of literature; but the majority, we may fairly assume, considering how common the practice was, cared little for letters and dispensed their patronage with an eye to personal prestige and advancement, pretty much as a public man now-a-days has his attendant journalist whom he supplies with information. The writer was rewarded for his services by an occasional dole of money and "permission to dedicate," the last item being considered as a fair division of the honors between author and patron. One may take it for granted that most of these patrons did not encourage fertility in their admiring servitors. They must have looked with a certain dismay on the publication of each new book. There was the dedication, to be sure, with its neat and gratifying compliments; but against this and largely overshadowing it was the necessity of parting with a considerable sum of ready money in token of lordly satisfaction. Indeed, Dr. Johnson's epistle was probably very heartily welcomed by every patron except the one to whom it was addressed. It offered them an excuse for retiring from an expensive and rather tiresome position; and patronage in that particular form died away, not because the writers were averse to it, but because the nobility had wearied of it. The patron of to-day is a very different

creature. He is not a member either of the aristocracy of society or of letters. He has, however, a good heart, and a genius for admiration. He is also offensively familiar with the masterpieces of literature, and has a sound journalistic connection. With these qualifications he worms himself into the friendship of young and ambitious writers, hugs them to his bosom, sits by their side, distributes paragraphs about their personal tastes and habits, and encourages them at the rate of three novels a year. Each work, of course, is dedicated "to the kind friend without whose sympathy and advice this book would never have been completed," and so the modern patron gets his reward. It is not much, considering the time and prophesies he has lavished on his protégé; but it is all he wants. His nature is a humble one, and he really believes he is doing a great deal of good. To be spoken of as "an encourager of young men," and an "earnest friend of literature" is the ambition of his life. With this and a few dedications and some reflection from the glory of such of his pupils as turn out successfully, the good fellow rests content. As for the volumes of trash which he is the means of bringing into the world, these trouble him not. And after all what are they when weighed against a career of helpful Christianity? Dr. Robertson Nicoll, for instance, the prince of modern patrons, has a reward in the spotlessness of his conscience which must quite outbalance any earthly encomiums. But we imagine that even he will feel a thrill of mundane satisfaction when he reads the following publisher's announcement: "Dr. Robertson Nicoll, whose editorial friendship was so valuable to both Barrie and McLaren, is also literary sponsor for Dr. Dawson."

FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS it has been almost impossible for an Englishman to take up any branch of study without encountering the name of Edward Walford. His reputation has not yet extended to America, but we make no apology for reconstructing from his career the life of a modern publisher's hack. A list of Mr. Walford's writings would fill at least a column of *THE CHAP-BOOK*. They range over philology, heraldry, theology, biography, poetry, history, and topography. He edited four different magazines. He wrote a shilling Latin grammar, and compiled lists of the peers, barons, and knights of the United Kingdom. One day he was editing Butler's *Analogy* and *Sermons* and the next engaged on a biography of Herrick. He arranged a journal for a popular series of the classics, and undertook the publication for several years of *Men of the Time*. A biography of Louis Napoleon came from his pen, as well as two or three Jubilee memoirs. Lives of statesmen alternated with tourists' guide-books, histories of London and Birmingham, and travels in English counties. There was hardly a subject which he had not touched without adorning in his seventy-four years of crowded life. And in London there are,

or were until recently, plenty of writers of his peculiar talent, men who could go to work at any publisher's order, and reel off successively an epic poem, a novel, a treatise on the philosophy of the beautiful, a hand-book to naval warfare, a life of Napoleon, an account of African explorations, and a volume of sermons. Of late these gentlemen have been mostly engaged in introducing Scotch dialect into British Museum romances, and hunting up the ethics of marriage; and perhaps we shall not be far wrong in regarding Mr. Walford as the last of the old race of publisher's hacks. No doubt he could have endorsed Goldsmith's epitaph on one of his predecessors:

Here lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,
Who long was a bookseller's hack:
He led such a damnable life in this world,
I do n't think he 'll wish to come back.

THE LETTER which Madame Sarah Grand wrote to the London *Daily Telegraph* in response to a review of her latest book is in a way as perfect as anything could be. The utter folly of replying to critics has long been suspected in the world, but Madame Grand's desire for advertising has so far surpassed her use for dignity that nothing short of this letter would answer her purposes. It may not be in the highest style of invective, but its noisy childishness makes it worth reprinting as a warning to authors.

"That you should insult Scott and Thackeray and Dickens with your approval pains me but little, since they will never hear of it; that you are so much cleverer than I am I must modestly accept your word for; that you strain yourself to be facetious and but prove yourself a dunce, I must attribute to your academic degree and a course of the blighting wit of the common-room; that you should attack me with base misrepresentation I set down to some rag of chivalry that still clings to you; that you are of ancient lineage I am willing to admit, since your putting into my mouth words and sentiments which are not mine shows you infected with the blood of Ananias; that you should take yourself as a serious judge of art is a crime for which it is painful to think you must one day settle between you and your God; but that you should write yourself down an admirer of mine is the ugliest blow that my art has dealt me, and I take this opportunity to publicly apologise for it."



THE YEW-TREE AT IFFLEY

AS I came homeward
At merry Christmas,
By the old church tower,
Thro' the churchyard grass,

And saw there, circled
With graves all about,
The yew-tree paternal,
The yew-tree devout,
Then this hot lifeblood
Was hard to endure.

O Death! I so lovèd
The one love sure.

For stars slip in heaven,
They wander, they break:
But under the yew-tree
Not one heartache.

Now I came homeward
At merry Christmas,
By the wise gray tower,
Thro' the green kind grass.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.

CORRESPONDENCE COCKNEY RHYMES AND OTHERS

NEW YORK, Dec. 5, 1897.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHAP-BOOK:

THE recent correspondence in THE CHAP-BOOK on Mr. Kipling's Cockney rhymes serves to show that to the poet as well as the philologist one dialect is about as good as another; and that the peculiarities of Cockney speech ought no more to be discriminated against than the Hoosier or Yorkshire tongue. A man for instances, rhymes "walk" with "pork," and although millions of English-speaking people pronounce the two words with the same inflection, the critics denounce him as a Cockney. Yet the same writers can rhyme "good" with "blood"—as Tennyson does—an atrocious and quite indefensible proceeding, except in Lancashire, where good is often pronounced *gud*—without offending anyone. In the latter case, presumably, we yield without a struggle to what is a frank exercise of the poet's license; while in the former we seem to detect a certain lack of breeding. The one is so wantonly impossible that we do not take the trouble to object to it; but the other is too near the ideally correct to be passed by uncriticised. There is not much logic in it, but a considerable amount of human nature. So, too, we shiver at a false quantity in Latin, and barely notice a similar mishap in our own tongue. Mr. Keppel spoke of "the fault-

less rhyming of an artist like Tennyson"; yet in the first few pages of his collected poems we come upon such monstrosities of assonance as "noon" rhyming with "alone;" "universe" with "fierce;" "woos" with "dews;" "prove" with "love;" "desire" with "higher;" "worm" with "form;" "swallow" with "yellow"—a good rhyme in the East End of London; "hours" with "bowers;" "undo" with "new;" and so on. And the odd part about it is that though "noon" and "alone" have no affinity whatever in the speech of cultivated men, they pass muster everywhere as a permissible rhyme; whereas the mating of "walk" with "pork"—a combination which Tennyson would have avoided like a New York *Journal* reporter—is sniffed at as a piece of vulgar Cockneyism, though the two words are hardly distinguishable except in the mouth of a Scotchman. Philology, indeed, like politics, is an object lesson in the worthlessness of logic as a weapon of criticism; it is chiefly because the English language is full of an amiable spirit of give and take, and takes its laws from human nature and not from etymology, that it is superseding all other tongues the world over. Yours truly,

DONALD WARREN.

THE VERY MINOR POET AGAIN

BERKELEY, Cal., Nov. 24, 1897.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHAP-BOOK:

I WONDER how many of the readers of THE CHAP-BOOK ever read *The Maple Dell*, recalled by Pierre la Rose in his delightful essay on "The Very Minor Poet," and how many have treasured in memory's archives a few lines of that marvelous effort. The poem had this in common with epics, that no one could read it and not be so impressed as to retain some portion of it in the mind, and it is possible that among THE CHAP-BOOK's host of admirers the entire work may be reproduced. I have known, in my somewhat limited experience, half a dozen or so persons who once possessed this book, but, unfortunately, each, upon inquiry, was found to have parted company with it. My own copy and I went diverging ways some twenty years ago; but I find that I can supply six lines toward the Homeric effort to which I should like to invite your readers. I am sorry that I can remember no more, but these citations are characterized by the same subtle, elusive essence of very minor poetry which marks the two lines quoted by Mr. La Rose. Indeed, they seem to me even more fully typical of the author's genius. The first four follow, I remember, immediately upon the hero's declaration, in "The Maple Dell," of his love for the poetess, who says:

"Dearest, true love must prevail.
I now will order the bridal veil.
Twenty yards of satin white
Will make a trained dress all right."

Comment upon this is needless for feminine readers of THE CHAP-BOOK, and a crueler hand than mine would withhold from drawing that veil from before the masculine imagination.

The only other lines that I can recall sum up the tragedy of the poem in the vivid manner that marks the whole production:

"In the second year of her babe's life
Deserted was the lawyer's wife."

I think these extracts will go far to show that power to impress the mind is not the only quality which *The Maple Dell* shares with epics.

ADELINE KNAPP.

AN OPEN LETTER

(In response to an open letter from Mr. Bangs, in THE CHAP-BOOK of November first.)

NOVEMBER FIRST, dear Mr. Bangs,
We read your lines on Mr. Lang's
Profuse production—your request
That he go fishing—take a rest.
That Mr. Lang writes much 't is true,
But how, dear sir, is it with you?
We scarcely touch a magazine
Wherein your stories are not seen.
And *Harper's Weekly* can't appear
Without some rhymes from you, we fear.
Golf, bicycle, and foot-ball men
Have all been treated by your pen;
Ward politician—statesman—king—
Dear sir, you write on everything.
What would occur if something new
Should come, unheralded by you?
We've laughed till we can laugh no more—
Still your amusing tales outpour.
If you had written less than half
Just think how much we still should laugh.
Dear Mr. Bangs, we do beseech,
And beg you, "practice what you preach."

CLARA SHERWOOD ROLLINS.



A POET OF THE SLUMS

THE greatest poetry is the voice of more than a generation, of an epoch even; it is the voice of all time—perhaps, of eternity. Nevertheless, poets who have expressed well the life and spirit of their generations are usually conceded to have justified their vocations.

It is complained that contemporary poetry is not "close to man" and does not embody the life of to-day as the poetry of yesterday embodied the life of yesterday—is, in short, an affair of affectation and of preciosity or of disordered nerves. There is some justice in the complaint. It may be that a large portion of the modern spirit is, in the very nature of things, unsuited to rhythmic treatment and that the present deplorable status is unavoidable. Or it may be that our poets are not yet sufficiently adjusted to the new world of science, industrialism, and commercialism to appreciate it; that they are—to venture the homeliest sort of a metaphor—newly-dropped kittens, whose self-complacent, self-unsuspected blindness is sure to be dispelled by the fullness of time. This latter is the more hopeful, if not the more likely, view. Because it is the more hopeful, poetry-lovers everywhere are straining to believe it.

All hail then to whatever product tends to assist the belief! Hail to the supremely modern *Barrack-room Ballads* and *Seven Seas*, which so conservative and fastidious a critic as Charles Eliot Norton admits to have put Rudyard Kipling in the line of succession of the English poets! Hail to other revelations of the poetic qualities of a too long despised and neglected civilization, even though they do not carry as plainly, as do Mr. Kipling's strophes, the marks of genius.

Here, in France, while painters, sculptors, short-story writers, essayists, dramatists, and novelists have been fathoming and revealing (too completely perhaps) contemporary life, the poets, over-loyal to tradition and inherited ideals, have done their utmost, broadly speaking, to escape it. The result has been that men whose genuine, if modest, talent would have sufficed to sing familiar themes sweetly, truly, and effectively, have been emitting horrid, blood-curdling shrieks, or, at best flatting badly in attempts to strike the remote and, to their fancy, eternal notes.

There are signs of a change for the better. During the past five or ten years, a number of influences have been at work to bring the poets to their senses, of which no one has been more potent than the tremendous vogue of the Literary and Artistic Cabarets of Montmartre and the Latin Quarter. Several fine poetic talents may be distinguished among the inevitable crowd of mediocrities and worse, attracted thither by the seductive prospect of easy publicity. In a medium from which—barring the edicts of a capricious police censorship—no theme of actuality has been excluded, the slums have naturally found numerous interpreters. But in this

genre—with all due respect to the posing Aristide Bruant, who often achieves a fair literary success, and to his more posing imitators, who occasionally do—only one unmistakeable poet has emerged; Jehan Rictus, a man who has done many kinds of hard manual labor, if report speaks true, and who knows the wretchedness of extreme penury by long and cruel experience. "A strange and highly typical figure; a pale, emaciated head we seem to have seen before somewhere. Where?—in church paintings perhaps; sad, lean, narrow-chested, tall, 'long as a tear,' and an expression—so weary! He does not essay a gesture. He has only his voice, the anguish of his face and the feverish gleam of his eyes with which to move us. His hands, held always behind him, twitch ineffectually as if trying to burst invisible bonds."

Paris, ever alert and open-minded, where a new talent is concerned, has shuddered, wept and applauded whenever he has recited and has forced his only published volume *Soliloques du Pauvre* through several editions.

In portraying the physical discomforts of poverty, the racking coughs, raging thirsts, aching bones, the nights without shelter or sleep, the days without food, the tears that scald and the tearlessness that deadens, Jehan Rictus has only done what has been done a score of times in prose and verse. Surely an empty heart keeps close company, more often than not, with an empty stomach, and it is in portraying vividly the mental and spiritual aspects of poverty that his work is fresh and unique. The humiliation of poverty's uniform—unkempt hair, missing shirt, draughty shoes, outlandish and threadbare garments—of the pavement bed, the paroxysms of hunger attributed to intoxication, the unsuccessful search for work, debarment from places of public resort, silent submission to insult and gibe; the disgust with filth, vermin, vulgar noise, endless monotony, enforced celibacy, patronizing pity, petty deceptions improvised to hide destitution, and hilarity improvised to keep back tears; the hatred of those who practise injustice and hypocrisy; the scorn of those who bestow and those who accept charity; the incipient madness of starvation, at once impelling to a shedding of the blood of the guilty and raising a horrid dread of confounding the innocent with the guilty; the regret for loss of respectability, courage, ambition, energy, talent, faith; the oppressive lonesomeness; the yearning for fresh distractions, innocent joys, cleanly living, for kindly words, sympathetic handclasps, kisses, caresses, companionship, friendship, love, precious responsibility; the stolid indifference to death,—these, the underlying sentiments of poverty, have never before been given in poetry, at least not without the blight of palpable literary effort or factitious emotionalism. "The maimed heart," said Jules Vallès in his *Réfractaires* "the heart, poniarded in this mute struggle for life, cannot be taken out of the chest and replaced by another. There are no wooden hearts in

the market. It remains there, bleeding, the poniard at its centre. Rich, one day, famous, perhaps, these victims of obscure combats may perfume their sores if they will, sponge up the blood, wipe away their tears; memory will tear open the wounds, strip off the bandages. A word, a song—joyous or sad—will be enough to raise in these sick souls the pale phantom of the past." It is with a similar appalling finality that the present record of physical, mental, and spiritual distress attains its apogee of horror;

"Même si qu'un jour j'tornais (*tournais*) au riche
Par un effêt de vot' Bonté,
Ce jour-là j'l'rai mett' eune (*une*) affiche,
On cherche à vendre un cœur gâté."

Equally unique and powerful with the exhibition of the multiform woes of the destitute, is the poet's satirical exposure of the inconsistencies, insincerities, vanities, and refined cruelties of the various sorts of people who exploit them. With an ironical pretence of rendering poverty deserved homage, he elaborates the important part it plays in the social scheme. Thanks to it, the employees of the *Assistance Publique* are able to maintain their families in comfort; magistrates to attain a rotund and tranquil old age; economists (deserving to it as a dignified entity) to win professorial chairs and academic honors; politicians to get the public ear; socialistic and anarchistic brawlers to end their careers as dawdling, alcoholic deputies; poets, painters, and novelists to swim in glory and good wine, and found luxurious establishments for their offspring.

The arrival of winter, which clots the blood of one class, stimulates the circulation of all the others. Then, reputable benevolence drums a reveille on hollow stomachs; burial companies wax radiantly bustling; salons, languishing for want of something to talk about, revive promptly; the tourist in the Midi, and the *bourgeois*, smug and snug by his fireside, daily commiserate suffering—after dinner—in a manner both magnificent and ample; society gambols at charity fêtes and balls; the press "redisCOVERS distress;" journalists sob, weep, and implore—at three sous a line. In a word, pitying the unfortunate is a profession like another, and if the day should ever arrive when there were no more poor in the world, "many people"—to render idiom for idiom—"would be badly in the soup." Such satire stings and routs by virtue of the moral force behind it; it is the whip of small cords plied by the man with a soul.

Satire broadens to rollicking humor in depicting the abject terror of a conscience-stricken *bourgeois* shopkeeper before the embarrassing spectre of a hungry man:

"Avez-vous vu ce miserable?
Cet individu équivoque?
Ce pouilleux, ce voleur en loques
Qui nous r'gardait manger à table?

Ma parole! on n'est pas (*plus*) chez soi
On ne peut pas digérer tranquilles—
Nous payons l'impôt, gn'a (*il y en a*) des lois!
Qu'est-ce qu'y (*ils*) font donc, les sergents
d'ville?"

I laughed almost to tears when I came upon this picture because I knew that *bourgeois* shopkeeper in—Boston, the historic famine winter of 1893-94, when a great press formed a syndicate for the dissemination of lies, when the authority of a great State was appealed to, and a great governor received congratulatory dispatches from the confines of a great country for prompt and decisive action in a great emergency—and all because a few half-starved devils took a notion to show themselves without washing their hands and faces or changing their clothes.

But to return to France. Jehan Rictus loves the white apparitions of the "first communicants," loves sunshine, lilacs, and water-cress, birds, and little children. Mrs. Browning's memorable "Cry of the Children" is feeble and conventional by the side of his "Farandole des Pauv's 'tits Fan-Fans." Charles Lamb was not sweeter, tenderer, daintier, in his tear-compelling reverie, "Dream Children," than he in dealing with his dream loves—his "cemetery of innocents," he calls them, his poor little "heap of dead."

"Et la vie les a massacrés
Mes mains les ont ensevelis,
Mes yeux les ont beaucoup pleurés."

In "Espoir" he dreams of a sweetheart:

"Voui (*oui*), quand j'vas (*vais*) ruer dans les
brancards,
Tout par un coup v'là qu'a (*elle*) s'élève,
La Cell' qui dort au fond d'mes rêves
Comm' eun' bonn' Vierg' dans un placard ?

Qui c'est? J'sais pas, mais alle (*elle*) est belle:
A s'lève en moi en Lun' d'Été,
Alle est postée en sentinelle
Comme un flambeau, comme eun' clarté !

A m'guette, alle écoute si j'l'appelle
Du fond du soir et du malheur;
Mém'qu'elle a les tétons en fleurs
Et tout l'Amour dans les prunelles !

Qui c'est? J'sais pas—p'têt' (*peut-être*) la Beauté
(A moins qu'ça n'soy' la Charité).
En tout cas c'est moi qu' alle attend
Et v'là déjà pas mal de temps.

"Qui c'est? J'sais pas alle est si loin!
Alle est si pâle dans l'soir qui tombe
Qu'on jur'rait qu'a sort de la tombe
Ousqu'on s'mariera sans témoins!

Also in "Déception":

Ah! quand c'est que j'y parviendrai
A la Mason (maison) de son sourire,
Quand c'est donc que je pourrai m'dire—
Ma vieill', ça y est, tu vas t'plumer!

Si c'est l'Hiver—p'têt qu'y (il) f'r'a chaud,
Si c'est l'Été, p'têt qu'y f'r'a tendre,
Mais qu'y lansquine (pleut) ou qu'y fass' beau,
Mon guieu (Dieu)—comme y f'r'a bon d's'étendre!

Voui, dormir—n'pus jamais rouvrir,
Mes falots sanglants su' la Vie,
Et dès lors (lors) ne pus rien savoir.
Des espoirs et des désepoirs.

Qu'ça soye la soir on ben (bien) l'matin,
Qu' y fass' moins noir dans mon destin,
Dormir longtemps—dormir—dormir!

Ho! mais bon sang! Cell' que j'appelle
Ça s'rait—y'pas la Femme en Noir
Qu'est à coup sûr la pus fidèle?
Oh! là là vrai! La Dame en Noir
(Qu'un jour tout un chacun doit voir
Aux lueurs des trent'-six chandelles
Qu'on allum' pour la recevoir).

Tonterr' de dieu, la Femme en Noir,
La Sans-Remords—la Sans-Mamelles,
La Dure-aux-Cœurs, la Fraîche-aux-Moëlles,
La Sans-Pitié, la Sans-Prunelles,
Qui va jugulant les pus belles
Et jarnacquant l'jarret d' l'Espoir;
Vous savez ben—la Grande en Noir
Qui tranch'—les tronch's par ribam-belles,
Et dans les tas les pus rebelles
Envoye son Trangoir en coup d'aile
Pour fair' du Silence et du Soir!

Et faire enfin qu' il y ait du bon
Pour l'gas (gars) qui rôde à l'abandon."

Of a verity, Eugène Carrière in print!

Another poem containing much of the same sad, tender beauty, strangely commingled with piquant malice, mischievous *esprit*, broad humor, and bitter satire, a poem which, in spite of startling liberties of vocabulary, rhythm, and rhyme, is said to have brought honest tears to the eyes of the impeccable de Heredia, is "Le Revenant." The "Revenant" is Jesus Christ. The appearance of Christ in nineteenth century Paris is a much-worn motive in French literature and painting, but the slum poet's handling of it is so new, bold, and strong that it seems to be altogether fresh.

"Le Revenant" is in three parts.

Part I, is a query as to what would happen if Jesus Christ should come back, introducing a summary of the principal events of His career, and a strikingly original appreciation of His personality and character. He is the "man of the beautiful

eyes and the beautiful dreams, whose heart was larger than life." But he is also "the anarchist," the "Gallilean tramp," the "carpenter on a strike," the "boon-companion of thieves," the "quack hated by the doctors," the "duffer who wore another cross than that of the Legion of Honor, who boxed the *bourgeois* shopkeepers, and who was n't over polite to the muffs of his time"—phrases through whose vulgar, uncouth, seemingly sacrilegious envelope intense love and admiration are plainly visible, and which accurately represent the religious attitude of the submerged, who, proverbially, applaud the name of Christ and hiss the barest mention of His professed followers and His church.

In Part II, Jesus Christ suddenly appears on a corner of one of the exterior boulevards. The surprised poet greets Him with bluff good-nature, laments drolly his inability to do the proper thing by Him in the matter of drinks, and overwhelms Him with eager, naive questions; then, touched to the heart by His dazed look and apparent helplessness, assumes a kindly superiority, taking Him under his protection as he might a lost infant, warning Him against many things, especially against the police, who will be certain to transport Him as a vagabond if He falls within their view. But the poet must speak for himself:

"Viens que j'te regarde—ah! comme t'es blanc!
Ah! comm' t'es pâle—comm' t'as l'air triste!
(T'as tout à fait l'air d'un artiste!
D'un de ces poireaux qui font des vers
Malgré les conseils les plus sages,
Et qu'les borgeois guign'nt de travers
Jusqu'à c'qu'y fass'nt un rich' mariage!)
—Ah! comm' t'es pâle—ah! comm' t'es blanc,
Tu grelottes, tu dis rien—tu trembles.
(T'as pas bouffé sûr—ni dormi!
Pauv' vieux va—si qu'on s'rait amis?
Veux-tu qu'on s'assoye su'un banc,
Ou veux-tu qu'on ballade (se promène) ensemble?
—Ah! comm' t'es pâle—ah! comm' t'es blanc,
T'as toujours ton coup d'lingue (couteau) au flanc?
De quoi—a (elles) saign'nt encor tes plaies
Et tes mains—tes pauv's mains trouées
(Qui c'est qui les a declouées?)
Et tes pauv's pieds nus su' l'bitume
T'es pieds à jour—percés au fer,
T'es pieds crevés font courant d'air
Et tu vas chopper un bon rhume!

—Ah! comm' t'es pâle—ah! comm' t'es blanc,
Sais-tu qu't'as l'air d'un Revenant,
Ou d'un clair de lune en tournée?
T'es maigre et t'es degingandé
Tu d'vais êt' comm' ça en Judée!
Au temp' où tu t'proclamais Roi!
A présent t'es couleur d'farine
Tu dois t'en aller d'la portrine
Ou ben—c'est ell' qui s'en va d'toi!

—Quéqu'tu viens fair? T'as pas marteau?
 D'où c'est qu't'es venu? D'en bas, d'en haut?
 Quelle est la rout' que t'as suivie?
 C'est-y qu'tu recommenc'rais ta vie?
 Es-tu venu chercher (*chercher*) du cravail (travail)?
 (Ben—t'as pas d' vein', car en c'moment,
 Mon vieux, rien n'va dans l'bâtim'nt);
 (Pis (puis), tu sauras qu'su' nos chantiers
 On n'veut pas voir les étrangers!)

—Quoi tu pens's de not' société?
 Des becs de gaz—des électriques.
 Ho! N'en v'là des temps héroïques!
 Voyons? Cause un peu? Tu dis rien!
 T'es là comme un paquet d'rancœurs.
 T'es muet? T'es bouché, t'es aveugle?
 Yaou . . . ! T'entends pas ce hurlement?
 C'est le cri d' l'Usine en mal d'enfant,
 C'est l' Désespoir actuel qui beugle.

—Toi au moins, t'étais un sincère,
 Tu marchais—tu marchais toujours;
 (Ah! cœur amoureux, cœur amer!)
 Tu marchais mêm' dessus la mer
 Et t'as marché jusqu'au—Calvairé!
 —Et dir' que nous v'là dans les rues!
 (Moi, passe encor, mais toi! Oh! toi!)
 Et nous somm's pas si loin d'Noël;
 T'es presque à poils (*nu*) comme autrefois,
 Tout près du jour où ta venue
 Troublait les brillants et les Rois!
 Ah! mes souv'nirs—ah! mon enfance,
 (Qui c'est putôt (*plutôt*) mal terminée)
 Mes ribonis (*souliers*) dans la cheminée,
 Mes mirlitons, mes joujoux d' bois!

—Ah! mes prièr's—ah! mes croyances!
 —Mais! gn'a donc pus rien dans le ciel!
 —Sûr! gn'a pus rien! Quelle infortune!
 (J'suis mêm' pas sûr qu'y ait cor (*encore*) la
 Lune.)
 Sûr gn'a pus rien, mêm' que peutêtre
 Y gn'a jamais, jamais rien eu.

Avoue-le, va—t' es impuissant,
 Tu clos tes châss's, t' as pas d'scrupules
 Tu protèges avec l'mêm' sang-froid
 L'sommeil des Bons et des Crapules
 Et quand on perd quéqu'un qu'on aime,
 Tu décor's, mais tu consol's pas.

Ah! rien n't' émut va, ouvr' les bras,
 Prends ton essor et n'reviens pas.
 T'es l'étendard des sans-courage,
 T'es l'albatros du Grand Naufrage,
 T'es l'Goéland du Malheur!

—Arrière, arrière n'va pas loin!
 Y vient un temps où tout se fait vieux,
 Où les pus bell's chos's perd'nt leurs charmes.

(Oh! v'là qu' tu pleur's, et des vrai's larmes!
 Tout va s'écrouler, nom de Dieu!)

—Ah! je m'gondole—ah! je m'dandine,
 Rien n's'écroule, y aura pas débâcle;
 Eh l'Homme à la puissance divine!
 Eh! fils de Dieu! fais un miracle?

Et Jésus-Christ s'en est allé
 Sans un mot qui pût m'consoler
 Avec eun' gueul' si retournée
 Et des mirett's (yeux) si désolées,
 Que j'm'en souviendrai tout' ma vie.

Et à c' moment-là, le jour vint
 Et j'm'aperçus que l'Homme Divin—
 C'était moi, que j'm'étais collé,
 D'vant l'miroitant d'un marchand d' vins.

On perd son temps à s'engueuler—”

The last line very like Browning, is it not? and worthy of him!

Part III is the afterthought, what the poet would most wish to have said to Jesus Christ if He really had returned and he had been the first to greet Him. Necessarily a repetition at many points of Parts I and II; its excuse is the following declaration of faith:

“Chacun a la Beauté en lui,
 Chacun a la Justice en lui,
 Chacun a la Force en lui-même
 L'Homme est tout seul dans l'Univers.
 Oh! oui ben seul et c'est sa gloire,
 Car y n'a qu' deux yeux pour tout voir.

Le Ciel, la Terre, et les Étoiles,
 Sont prisonniers d' ses cils en pleurs
 Y n' peut donc compter qu'sur lui-même,
 J'm'en vas m'remuer qu' chacun m'imite,
 C'est là qu'est la clef du Problème
 L'Homme doit êt' son Maître et son Dieu.”

And the following threat:

“Donnez-nous tous les jours l' brich'ton régulier,
 Autrement nous tach'rons d' le prendre.”

It was probably this downright and direct threat that led Jules Claretie, writing for *Le Temps*, to say: “The poetry of the lean Jehan Rictus is the Fronde of to-day. Far better that it mutter in the cabaret than in the street.” The majority of the press critics, ignoring this single unequivocal and numerous veiled anathema, have pronounced his work “gentle and refined.” Both interpretations are, in a measure, right.

Desiring revolt with his whole soul, and sure of the righteousness of it, he is likewise so sure of its entire uselessness that he deprecates far oftener than he proclaims it. A better state of things, in even the most distant future, is to him but a dubious perhaps. From kings, presidents, councils, parliaments,

nobles, *bourgeois*, popes, priests, economists, reformers, and philanthropists he expects nothing. From his own down-trodden class he expects no more. They are stupid cattle, waiting patiently to be bled. Enfeebled by hardship, cowed into spiritlessness by police and magistrates, ready to share with the dogs the crumbs that drop from rich men's tables, to cringe and fawn before the faintest prospect of a bone, to sell themselves outright for two bars of music, three sous of absinthe or a couple of rounds of tobacco, blinded by the dazzling fiction of universal suffrage,—they are only fit, at the moment a Bastille ought to be taken, to take the tram of that name, and show more signs of reverting to the type of the ourang-outang than of ushering in the era of universal affection, when all men will be as brothers and all nations of one speech and one mind.

His prayers are despairing cries to a half-credited God, a God at best so old, deaf, blind, unconcerned, and far away that His interference is not much to be counted on.

He conjures Jesus Christ into the world only to chaff Him for His faith in man, to characterize His teachings as the beautiful soliloquy of an unfortunate, and, finally, to warn Him to make good His escape if He would keep out of the clutches of nineteenth-century Judas Iscariots and Pontius Pilates.

The prophets and teachers who have tried radically to better the world have always been treated as criminals, and always will be. It is vain to struggle to make things over. Man is a miff by nature, and nature will never change. The kilogramme of iron falsely called a heart will never be anything more than a kilogramme of iron. The bank of love assigned centuries ago. Modern civilization is organized distress. These are his sober and reasoned conclusions.

But, ever and anon, when pain grows too great to be borne, the blind instinct of self-preservation overtops reason. Then he swears to be his "own good God all alone," taking "his own skin for a banner, since that is the only thing he has in the world." Even so his words are less the rallying cry of a reformer who believes in success than the desperate defiance of a Prometheus chained to a rock, and recoil is speedy to the normal sentiment, reiterated so often as to be a veritable refrain, "It's only life, after all; there's nothing to do but to weep." The social revolutionists, while forced to welcome his masterly arraignment of society, find him quite too pessimistic for their purposes. No wonder.

In just the degree, however, that his pessimism is unfortunate from the point of view of the social propaganda, is it fortunate from the point of view of art. It is this sane distrust of a panacea that saves him from being a poet with a cut and dried programme, a Karl Marx or an Auguste Comte—horrible thought!—in rhyme. His poetry stands as the utterance of a man who has felt keenly, who

dares to tell what he has felt, and who has the ability to tell it well; and may not be discredited by the discrepancies of any social theory whatsoever. If the man Jehan Rictus has a pet social theory, as is just possible, he has known better than to cumber his verse with it; the poet, Jehan Rictus has none. He is an artist; therein lies the gist of the whole matter. Artist, not simply because his construction is so coherent that quoted excerpts are often misleading and always inadequate; because he wields the Parisian argot so easily and naturally that it never distracts attention from the thought; because he minglest blasphemy with piety in a way to humanize piety and spiritualize blasphemy, and vulgarity with refinement in a way to chasten vulgarity and virilize refinement; nor because he has at ready command suggestive images and original figures, and is a master of epigram, picturesque epithet, condensed description, and of rhyme and rhythm as often as he chooses to be, which is not, perhaps, often enough—but artist, in a large sense, because he utters without artifice, without pose, so truly and directly that the medium of type is forgotten, the flux and reflux of emotion in a suffering soul; and, what is more, with so profound a realization of the solidarity of pain, we know even before he chooses to tell us that he is "the modern man voicing his grievance," and that his "hands and heart are overloaded with the universal woe."

It may be a far call from Jehan Rictus to Shelley, to Keats, to Poe; from the "Revenant," to the "Raven," the "Skylark," the "Grecian Urn," to that greatest poetry which is the voice of the ages. The *Soliloques du Pauvre* are genuine poetry for all that.

"Jehan Rictus," said a recent writer in the *Gil Blas*, "has definitely fixed a new poetic sob in the cacophony of eternal human suffering." Needless to add a sob was not his choice. Fate chose for him. His is no case of "wilful sadness in literature." Sweet, tender, affectionate by nature, enamored of sunlight, he might, under happier conditions, have given a smile, a cheer, a pean even to the world. In giving a sob he gave what life gave him—his all.

Alas and alack! Jehan Rictus and his sob are not so remote nor so alien as they seem. *Mutatis mutandis* the *Soliloques du Pauvre* might have been produced in New York, in Boston, in Chicago. The long-prophesied and long-dreaded literary proletariat has arrived. America, as well as France, it seems, must have sobs from the slums among her sobs in literature. Industrialism the Death-Angel of poetry? Vain apprehension! so she withhold not her poor. For agony is eternally lyric.

ALVAN F. SANBORN.



THE PASSING OF THE MAGI

UPON the shore where sweeps the tide of night,
They dress their broad pavilions hung with gold
And purple, whose high star-tipped poles uphold
Strange shield and gonfalon. Each lean seer, hight
High Duke of Egypt, crouches in affright,
Garbed in fantastic tatters, swart and old,
And strains his hungry eyes across the fold,
Mumbling delirious litanies of blight;

Till at the call some lowering Ethiop form,
Its black limbs shackled with a star-linked trail,
Tilts its great urn until the moonlight warm
Pours on the vineyards of the sleeping vale;
But with the flood the chapel's white walls glow;
The tents dissolve, far cymbals clank for woe.

THOMAS WALSH.

HER LAST LOVE

M R. TOTSON was round and ruddy and comfortable. He hated pain; his own most, of course; but, after that, anybody's. He hated walking, but he would go all around the square any time to avoid seeing the old pencil-vender without legs, who haunted the southern corner of his hotel.

So it was in a voice of whining complaint rather than of stern reproach that he addressed the old lady facing him: "I wish above all things that I could keep you here. The Lord knows I'd like to. In a way I kind of owed it to your people. They helped me to build this very hotel, and as far as I am concerned myself, the room would always be at your disposal, and you're welcome to your board, too, goodness knows; but if you make yourself disagreeable to the rest of the people, that's another matter. You can't expect me to lose other boarders on your account. That would be more 'n charity; it would be plain foolishness."

"I don't know what I've done to anybody," she said. She was a little, faded, yellow creature, not unlike a time-worn bit of parchment, and she looked pitifully frail and near to the final crumbling away.

"It is n't that you do things to people; it's that you talk too much—all the boarders complain of you; they say you ask questions about their private and intimate affairs, and in public, too, and loud, so that every one can hear you; and you carry tales from one to another; it's too bad; it makes trouble and upsets everybody." He looked at her pathetically. He felt that he was very much to be pitied in this troublesome matter.

"People in your position," he began again, more

energetically, "ought to be very cautious about what they do."

"I'd most begun to forget my position," said the old lady reflectively.

"Yes, now you see, that's just it. You ought n't to forget. Here you were depending on me for everything; if it had n't been for me takin' you in, as I did, you'd have starved on the streets. The Lord knows I'm full of compassion. The least you could do was to make it easy for me, and instead of that you go and offend everybody, right and left."

She did not answer. She sat down in the slippery, black horse-hair chair stretching out its arms behind her, and stared vaguely ahead.

Mr. Totson shifted from one foot to another, and volunteered—

"I'm sorry enough. I did all I could; but you see how it is and that I could n't help it."

"Well, I suppose," she said firmly, "I've got to eat as long as I live, and if it can't be here any longer, it'll have to be in the poorhouse. I've known this many a year it was standin' over there waitin' for me and time would come when I'd have to turn in."

But a new thought gave her new energy, and she stood up and faced her host.

"You tell 'em all here I'm leavin', but do n't you tell 'em where I'm goin'. You say you do n't know; you do n't. I'm not sure myself yet. Do you hear? You say you do n't know. I might have plenty of relatives left yet for aught anybody in this house knows to the contrary."

"All right, Mrs. Maynard. I won't say a word. I'm sorry; it's all a pity, but you see how it is, and I can't help it." And Mr. Totson pivoted around on his heel and went out with an air of relief that one evil of this troublous life was outlived as far as he was concerned.

The little old lady walked slowly across the big, bare hotel parlor, and gazed out the window at the dusty electric-car line below.

She had been born in this town; and she had been rich here, and young and gay and frivolous and proud and overbearing. She had once owned that great white colonial house, a half square off, now turned into a club-house for men about town. And she had lived and loved and hoped and rejoiced here, under this same sky and in the shadow of these same buildings. She had married here, one of the many men she had flirted with in a light-hearted youth, and her husband had dissipated her fortune and her youth and then died; and then her only baby died; and her father and mother, two brothers and a sister had gone the way of all flesh, and she was left penniless and alone; a little, old lady, divested of all the dignities and accessories of life—a withered leaf, clinging by a frail stem to a barren tree.

"So, the poorhouse it must be," she said, "but no one shall know it; not if I can help it;" and the

bent but wiry twig of womanhood wheeled swiftly toward the door leading into the long corridor, and she said bitterly:

"You shall none of you know where I've gone; and you shan't be glad either if you have driven me to the poorhouse."

All that day she wandered restlessly through the streets from square to square; down among the wharves along the water front where her father had owned a feed and grain business once. The faded, yellowish bricks glared up at her with their worn, familiar faces. She walked, looking down at the irregular surface of the sidewalk where she knew every chip and gap along the way and every shade from the deep dark red to dusty pink. The noises of trucking and shiploading, of wagons and carts rumbling over the cobble-stone pavements, were deafening. It was only May, but the sun glared hot upon the streets. Above it all, off to the east, cool and shadowy and silent, loomed the poorhouse, as it had stood, cool and shadowy and silent, these many years, waiting for her.

As afternoon came on she turned her steps toward the residence part of the town. Up and down these streets she wandered, too, as if in search of the life she had lost, gazing with questioning glances up at the houses. They faced her with uncompromising sternness; nothing but decorous blinds and hard, white lace curtains confronted her; never a kindly face peeped through anywhere.

At last she stood at the end of the town, upon the oyster-shell beach that sloped gently to the bay; she had reached the limits now; she had been the length of this place; she had passed the successful, opulent lawyer, her own and her husband's former friend, Mr. Brown, and his face as he passed was a blank. She had fairly jostled against her old neighbor, Mrs. Taylor, who smiled brightly at her out of the blind fullness of her own content, and hastened on, engrossed in all the small business of living. Nowhere had the face of her own home offered her a vestige of hope or an unlooked-for vista.

And there waited off there, to the east, cool, and shadowy and silent, the poorhouse, as it had waited since she was a baby.

She was seventy-two, but she came of a long-lived family, and she could not fancy death coming clamorous to spare her this last degradation. She knew it might be five or ten years more before that other home, cooler, more silent, more shadowy, would open to her.

The leaning sun was dying the waves in a strange and mystic splendor of crimson, and fifty or more small craft pointed their lean, black fingers to the lurid sky.

But what message was there in all this gorgeousness to a tired forlorn old soul, forsaken by the world full of men, asking only some tiny shred of comfort, some relic of her past, for memory's sake, and to whose prayer the heavens were deaf?

She turned her face away from the water, and set out resolutely toward the gray east—toward the Episcopal minister's house. He must take the necessary steps toward getting her into the poorhouse.

Two days later she was duly installed in her own room, up six flights of stairs. She looked at the four, square, white-washed walls, and saw only barrenness, only emptiness. There was a rocking-chair by an open window, and she sat down in this, and looked away over the roofs of the neighboring houses, and she said to herself: "It has come; now nothing matters any more." She thought truly that the last step in her degradation and desolation had been taken, and that the real end of life had come; for she saw no outlook, and could fancy no new beginnings.

So warily life tricks us, showing us a stray thread just before our eyes, and letting us fancy we see the whole woof.

One day, as she was sitting idle in her rocking-chair by the window which offered her only outlook upon life, a thin, gray cat crept slowly around the door which stood a crack open. Once entered, it stood still, and arched its back and stared at her. She hated cats as most women hate rats, as all people hate rattlesnakes, with a mixture of unreasoning terror and nauseating disgust. The animal slunk slowly toward her, stopping at every step, watching her with dilated green eyes.

"Take the cat away! take the cat away!" she screamed aloud.

There was no sound of response. She called again, and this time louder. Still absolute silence reigned. Probably no one in that part of the house was awake. Nearly all the old people slept in the hot afternoons.

To Mrs. Maynard it seemed that all the dull injuries of the long, sad stretch of the years were culminating now in one instant of acute and terrified suffering.

She and the cat were alone together in the evil-smelling, small, glaring room. And the cat approached her slowly, eyeing her steadily with great wide orbs that questioned always—questioned about what?

The old lady was horror-stricken, and fascinated, too.

"Are you the poorhouse cat?" she asked faintly, and she would not have been too much surprised if the cat had answered, so novel and so terrifying an experience did this seem to her.

The cat crept nearer, pausing at every two steps, and keeping the great, unanswered eyes fixed on her victim; then slowly she arched her back, and rubbed herself along Mrs. Maynard's skirts. The old lady drew her feet up on to the round of the chair, and clasped her wrinkled hands tight in each other.

"It's time to get used to everything," she said aloud, and the terror of the spell seemed broken a

Her Last Love

little by the sound of her own voice. "I must be brave," she went on; "there's no use sitting here like a scared baby."

For often, in robbing us of all else, life leaves us a certain freedom of mind and fortitude of soul that we have struggled in vain to attain under happier circumstances.

"After all, I never heard of a cat's killing any one."

Long custom prevented her reflecting that it did not matter much whether she was killed or not, and that a day or two before she had thought of death as the only welcome visitor possible to her.

The cat rubbed against her three or four times. She watched it curiously now; her muscles relaxed, her horror abated. At last it dawned upon her that this was an expression of appreciation and approval. "She means it friendly," she said, and her voice choked a little and she stretched her hand down cautiously and touched the fur. It was surprisingly warm and soft. The cat stood still and purred. It came over her slowly with a subtle sense of relief that this creature was a living thing—a living, lonely, thing, with afflictions and longings such as her own.

"She means it all kind," she said in a breaking voice; "and she won't be offended if I talk too much or ask too many questions. I do n't believe she'll ever try to chase me out from here or be glad when I'm trod down." And she hardly recoiled when the animal sprang into her lap and settled down into a ball for a comfortable snooze.

"I reckon you needed a friend," the old lady said, laying her hand shyly on the fur, "and I reckon I did to."

And from that day on Mrs. Maynard loved the cat as the cat had first loved her; faithfully, with few words and fewer claims.

And a new life began for these two forlorn creatures, each in need of the other; that blessed life in common where both feel a new security in the steadfast faith and ready sympathy of a fellow creature.

Mrs. Maynard had the handle wrenched off an old market basket, and wadded and lined it, and here pussy slept in state at night. Sometimes when the old lady was wakeful she would sit up and talk with the cat, who was never ill-humored at being roused, but responded with an unvaryingly courteous meiouw.

In the twilights of the long hot summer they often sat together in the rocking-chair by the window, and above the chimneys they caught all the marvellous tintings of the evening sky until the gray veil of night fell and the vast void spaces showed black among the gleaming stars. Mrs. Maynard would smooth the soft, warm cuddling bundle of breathing life, and talk at ease.

If she had learned in bitterness to distrust the human heart and its charities she learned once more to have no fears and no reserves with this friend.

All the gossip—all the vague, wandering interest in other people's affairs, so bravely retained in a life that demanded of her only long patience and enduring restraint—all this she confided to Pussy; and she had never had a better confidant; for Pussy's absolute discretion was above suspicion and her secrecy as secure as the grave's.

At last, when Mrs. Maynard felt inclined to make candid confession of her soul, she needed to obey no warnings to halt at uncomplimentary opinions and at possible false constructions.

Once, on a sudden impulse, and with a half guilty feeling, and yet with a longing to have all clear and fair between them, she told Pussy all about her former distrust of cats; how she had often likened them to snakes and misunderstood their glances, their every motion; but the cat only looked at her with a philosophic and resigned air—life was evidently to her a matter of infinite complexity where only the smallest modicum of blame, if any, fell upon the wrong-doer. To tell the truth, too, she was a cat of no race-prejudices; she stood for the world and humanity and cats at large, and kindness and mercy were the only two articles in her creed.

That was a particularly happy evening anyway for there was an especial treat in store for the morrow to be anticipated. It was to be the day when the attic was unlocked, and this only happened once a month in the poorhouse, and all the old people were allowed to go up and examine their trunks and to bring down what they needed from them, if haply they owned anything; and Mrs. Maynard had planned re-lining Pussy's basket with a small foot-quilt that she had packed away, and she was going to get out some old pink and blue ribbons, somewhat worn, perhaps, but still just the thing for the neck of a poorhouse cat, who had no right to be too spick and span.

It was a memorable evening, too, for it proved the last that they were to spend conversing peacefully together through the twilight.

The next afternoon Mrs. Maynard took a long nap, exhausted from her exertions with her trunk. She had set the tray out on the floor and gone over and over the little relics of her gay days; she had handled and caressed once more the tiny, worn, worsted sock that had once covered her baby's foot, so many long years ago, and she had looked over all the pictures she no longer had the heart to face daily; ruthlessly, wantonly, she had torn open and set to bleeding anew the half-healed wounds of her heart; and when it was over she slept soundly from sheer exhaustion.

When she awoke late in the afternoon she rose and looked dully about for her cat. She felt in advance the vague, soothing sensation of gathering up the warm ball of fur in her arms and looking out upon the still twilight as was her wont. In her chaotic life, pushed from sudden change to sudden change of progressive renunciation, all usage had

grown sweet to her, and already the habit of confiding companionship had grown upon her.

But Puss was nowhere to be found. Mrs. Maynard watched night come on alone. At tea time she made enquiries. No, no one had seen the cat, and no one thought it mattered whether they had seen her or not. Until she was ordered to bed at 10 o'clock, the little old lady wandered through the halls and up and down the stairs and into the yard, calling, calling.

It was the first time since the beginning of their friendship that Pussy had failed her at night; and the night offered her a new horror, as if, never before, had she been in a room alone. Several times she started up in a dazed sense of general sorrow, only to be confronted by the empty basket.

The next day she begged leave of absence and trudged bravely into town. She went to the office of her old friend, Lawyer Brown, and borrowed a dollar and a half, insisting upon leaving her gold watch chain with him in exchange. Then back in the noonday heat, over the hot brick walks, her heart bounding ahead of her. The money she divided into three parts and gave to the servants to search for the cat. But it was all futile, and another night found her still alone with a questioning anxiety.

Suddenly, quite early the next morning, it occurred to her that she might have locked her poor friend up in the attic. It was not long enough for serious harm to have been done, and at breakfast she confided her fears to the matron, who was little inclined to allow the key to be taken at so irregular a date. Finally, however, considering the discomfort of letting the cat die up there and partially touched, too, by poor old Mrs. Maynard's grief, she gave it up.

Then the old lady climbed the stairs keen and alert for the well-known voice. She opened the door and wandered about, calling, calling. Then she unlocked her trunk and lifted the tray; she took out a black dress skirt—and there lay the cat, stretched out in the final posture of rigid agony—wan and thin and distorted; the mouth open, the teeth showing grim and horrible; the fur clammy and the muscles of the throat still strained and swollen.

She gave a scream of horror, threw her hands up over her face, and fled stumbling down the stairs.

That night she sat in the rocking chair by the window in the gentle gloaming; and her last affection lay dead in her heart.

She had covered her up, in there—she had smothered her, the faithful friend, the tender companion of her dearness. The wretched animal might have shrieked and screamed, but no ear would have heard.

And the lonely old lady clasped her wrinkled hands tight, and the tears rolled hot and fast down her cheeks.

"It's been like this always, always," she sobbed.

"Everything I've loved brought me fright or pain or long suffering; and then when I've got used to it all and was glad anyway, they went away and left me more alone than ever. There was Frank—and the baby—and all the family—and all my friends, and now—and now the cat's gone, too."

And when she realized that this last tragic travesty of love had failed her, as the others had done, had betrayed and bereft and left her desolate, she threw back her head, dried her eyes, and turned to gaze across the monotonous gray sea of grimy chimneys, and she was sick at heart and baffled and sore wounded, but unsurrendering, bitter, rebellious.

She felt horribly alone.

And the dull tale of the long, dark years ahead of her seemed interminable. CLARENCE WELLFORD.

MIXED MAXIMS

A MAN is known by the trumpery he keeps.
Never put a gift cigar in your mouth.
The lack of money is the root of all evil.
Where wisdom is bliss 't is folly to be ignorant.

A pitch in time saved the nine.
Chain up a child and away he will go.
Virtue is its only reward.
The course of free love never did run smooth.
A bird in the hand lays no eggs.
All that a man hath will he give to his wife.
Many hands like light work.
It's a wise child that owes his own father.
Policy is the best honesty.
The rolling stone catches the worm.
Osculation is the thief of time.
A thirsty man will catch at a straw.
Absinthe makes the heart grow fonder.
Straws show which way the gin goes.
"Heaven lies about us in our infancy," and this world lies about us when we are grown up.
The woman who collaborates is lost.
It is not good for man to give a loan.
The wages of sin is debt.
Every dogma must have its day.

CAROLYN WELLS.

REVIEWS

A GREAT AMERICAN

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.—Edited by Annie Fields. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

"THE moment has at last arrived," writes Mrs. Fields in her Preface, "when the story of Mrs. Stowe's life can be given in full." Mrs. Fields has had advantage of much material which many another could not have attained, and, in a

sense, her work is authoritative as well as detailed. Certainly we gain from it a clear and vivid impression of Mrs. Stowe's life, of the early days at Nut Plains, of the western experience (for Cincinnati was then in the West), of the collegiate life at Brunswick and Andover, of the ante-bellum days and the war-time, of the European visits, of the orange plantation at Mandarin, and of the house at Hartford. The story is told, as one would infer, chiefly from the letters and writings of Mrs. Stowe. It is not a minute narrative, but it is an intimate one, and will be largely read, and with immense interest.

Mrs. Fields, however, does not give us much beside narrative, and this we rather regret. We wish she had done more than act merely as editor. If the time has come to tell in full the story of Mrs. Stowe's life, it is surely proper now to make an attempt, at least, at an estimate of her position among the men and women of the nineteenth century and of her work. Mrs. Fields has put together pleasantly the materials at hand, but she has abstained from discussion. She has left us to decide for ourselves the position in the history of our country which was held by Mrs. Stowe, and just what manner of woman was she that held it.

Mrs. Stowe was eminent in various lines. She was a poet, a novelist, a reformer, a patriot. Her brother, Henry Ward Beecher, is probably most noteworthy, as we think now of his life and work, as a great citizen. He held practically no public office, and yet he was a great public man. Mrs. Stowe held, in many respects, a position very like her brother's; yet we cannot precisely call her a great citizen, nor, indeed, if we could, should we so best indicate her real title to the admiration of her countrymen and women.

Nor should we do rightly if we considered Mrs. Stowe merely as a figure in literature. She wrote one or two beautiful hymns, yet she will not be especially remembered as a poet. Mrs. Fields tells us of the circumstances which led to the writing of "Still, still with Thee." The hymn will always call forth an emotional response from the hearer, and yet it is certainly not the really poetic expression of the moment which gave it birth. It touches our own hearts but does not give us the author's. Nor do we think that Mrs. Stowe will ever again be held great as a novelist. Of her several books we think that *The Minister's Wooing* is the finest as a novel and *Old Town Folks* as a picture of manners and of life. It is long since we read either, and yet we think that both have higher intrinsic value as fiction than *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Mrs. Stowe's greatest work was carried to popularity, not unworthily, indeed, but yet very largely, by the particular circumstances which gave it birth, or, one might almost say, by the circumstances of which it was itself one. It is needless to talk of its "artistic" value. Mrs. Stowe would appear to have thought but little on such matters so far as

Uncle Tom's Cabin was concerned. But the book had in it something which the world prizes above all, and for that it was valued, and rightly.

For, as George Sand said in a review quoted by Mrs. Fields, "if one's culture is of the truest kind it will never resist a just and right emotion." And it was that matter which we feebly call "right emotion," with which Mrs. Stowe always dealt and dealt convincingly.

We have all of us met with persons who seemed to divine instinctively the noblest view of things and to trust wholly to it. They may be, though they often are not, quiet and reserved persons, gentle little women quite unknown outside of some very narrow circle, rather silent men who speak readily only to their particular friends. And yet, reserved or not, these people can always speak to us of spiritual things in a way both intuitive and assured. We say "spiritual things," but such words have far too conventional a meaning. We mean that with such persons the ordinary rights and wrongs, the good and bad, the joys and sorrows of everyday life are matters which, as they see them, are not ordinary, not commonplace, but irradiate and inspiring. When we talk to such persons, and on such matters we can talk to them if to no others, we feel as if we were with those who understood entirely things as we have little idea of, although we recognize them a necessary part of life.

Such a woman was Mrs. Stowe and such a man was Henry Ward Beecher. They both knew instinctively the deepest and strongest powers in life and they both trusted absolutely to them. But furthermore, they were both gifted in such a way as to be able to speak out and tell what they knew, not merely to a single friend or to a number of friends in some small circle, but to the nation. Their power in this direction found expression in different ways. The one made Plymouth Church and the other wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

As to art there is doubtless not so much to be said, but *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was certainly a great book. It was devoted to an increase of men's happiness, to the redemption of the oppressed (to use Walter Pater's criterion of great art). It enlarged many narrow sympathies and ennobled and glorified many in their sojourn here. And if not "written immediately to the glory of God," it was written in a most humble and reverent spirit and with the abiding sense of service of one whose glory is rather in service than in praise. And these ends it gained by the spiritual insight of its author and her entire confidence in spiritual things.

Mrs. Stowe was a woman who divined the power of spiritualised emotion and trusted to it, not merely in the narrower field of domestic life but in the larger field of national life. As we, every one of us, know certain who have in the things of this world "a sense of something far more deeply interfused" than the things which hold most of us too tightly in

definite modes of action and of thought, so the nation for the moment, saw in Harriet Beecher Stowe one whose words could lighten "the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world" and show forth truth and duty clearly.

Such a national figure is rare, for though many have the insight and the confidence, to some degree at least, so that they are and believe, few have the knowledge and the power and the opportunity and the courage and the will to make themselves felt by the nation. All these things Mrs. Stowe had, as the reader of this *Life and Letters* may see. She gained them partly from her birth, partly from her life, partly from her time. We suspect that her editor may not agree with our estimate, at least she nowhere expresses any such view. Still from the materials which she has put together, we think any serious reader will be able to trace for himself the character, as we have indicated it, of this great American.

THE BETHIAN GOSPEL

THE BETH BOOK.—By Sarah Grand. 12mo. D. Appleton & Co. \$1.50.

NO ONE WHO REMEMBERS the interminable Twins would expect their creator to deliver her last message under less than the five hundred and seventy pages which picture the heroine from her unwelcome borning to somewhere in her early twenties.

Rather has one profound cause for thankfulness that almost two-thirds of the story have to do with Beth the child, or Beth the girl, instead of Beth the propounder of problems and the mouthpiece of Sex. For the child is naughty and often funny and the girl is saucy, sometimes witty—but with reform coming in at the door humor flies out at the window, never to return.

If it were not for the amazing snobbishness, ignorance, and vulgarity of the family from which she sprung, and whose doings and thinkings are pictured with all the naïveté of a brilliant memory of fact, one would unhesitatingly declare much of Beth to be autobiographic. The inconsistencies on every page of the mass of minute detail are of the sort which one tells—or conceals—about one's self. Beth is musical to agonies of pain and pleasure, yet cannot tell when anyone sings flat; hates and loathes lies, yet tells them with every attention to corroborative detail; has the keenest sense of humor, yet speaks publicly on "The Desecration of Marriage"; has strange warnings of fate and clairvoyant thrills when hours of destiny are approaching, yet suffers not the least seismic disturbance upon her marriage to a man whom one of her friends in high life calls a plausible hog.

The new psychology denies genius except as a large activity of a human kind, but the new peda-

gogy might have correlated Beth's head and heart into a better showing for her insistent claim to greatness than an erratic childhood and a pragmatical womanhood.

For, after a due course of married misery—always the prodromal stage of this disease—Beth develops into the very *vade mecum* of virtue, the woman's own friend and adviser. People, otherwise guiltless, are dragged in to be her interlocutors and serve only to give her cues for half-page speeches upon art, style, the novel, the individual, always with woman, lovely but abused, for their pivot. As there is no cessation, there is literally no reserve. Everything has its turn, from the indelicacy of opening one's wife's letters, through the comparative ethics of George Eliot and George Sand, to vivisection and the regulation of the social evil.

Naturally Beth meets Evadne and Ideala in their lair, and is hailed by them as a younger and lustier sister, who will be able to say all that they may by mischance have left unsaid as to man and his habits, and thus add to the gloom of nations.

For a brief season, thousands of the earnest here and in serious England, who take Mme. Grand as soberly as she takes herself, may be agitated or elevated by contact with the Bethian gospel. In America the causes for much of its protest have rarely or never existed; even now it wars with a past or passing stage, with conditions going or gone. Those who have achieved the idea of evolution will not value its contents, while those who demand that it shall represent itself with dignity will revolt from its grossness of method and grandioseness of phrase. It will always be difficult for that added drop of nervous fluid which is said to make an American, to understand certain features and aspects of upper middle class life in England. Their eatings and their beatings are alike a puzzle.

It is to be imagined that *The Beth Book* may come as she herself expresses it, "with comfort to thousands of those who suffer, who, when they hear, will raise their heads once more in hope." Others, temperamentally disinclined to the woman-problem-novel will join the sestina of the tramp royal when he sings,

"But presently you feel that you will die
Unless you get the page you're readin' done."

LOCHINVAR

LOCHINVAR.—By S. R. Crockett. Harper & Brothers.

THE CONSTRUCTION of a romance requires something more than facility of invention; it requires an imagination which can conceive characters, as well as situations, and can justify the sequence of events. Without this quality it becomes a mere child's tale, a series of unrelated incidents. It must be true in

its essentials, or it is but the book of a day, forgotten as soon as read. If it is to endure, it must answer to some fundamental need of our nature, and it must have some basis of reality, either in character or in action. This basis of truth we miss in Mr. Crockett's latest story. The pleasure of getting into difficulties for the sake of getting out of them is the one most in evidence in this blithe romance, wherein battle and murder and sudden death are everyday matters, mere by-play in the drama. The action takes place in 1688 and centers in the career of Lochinvar, who is a private in the Prince of Orange's Douglas regiment of dragoons. The Prince himself plays but a small part, and the hero occupies as a soldier a position so shifting and intangible that it is difficult to tell in which direction lies his honor. That is a consideration for which the author seems to care but little, except when it can aid him to an effective situation. Then it becomes a necessity of life, and he shouts it aloud and assumes an impressive pose. The love-story is the only thing which is entirely clear and consistent. Everything, including probability, is sacrificed. It works itself out from beginning to end against heavy odds, for the path is no sooner straightened and made smooth for the lovers than a new set of difficulties arises, and we fight the battle once again. The manner of telling the story is not without grace, yet it seems thin, and the author's attempt at subtlety in the characterization is futile. It amounts merely to prettiness. The villain is fortunately not all villainy, and the hero is not all gentleness. But there is a fatal lack of inevitableness in the situations. It is only when one is in the mood for a pretty sentimental story of impossible adventures, that *Lochinvar* will be found satisfactory.

FRENCH HISTORY

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.—*By Justin H. McCarthy.* 12mo. *Harper & Bros.* Vol. 2. \$1.50.

GROWTH OF THE FRENCH NATION.—*By George Burton Adams, Professor of History in Yale University.* 12mo. *The Macmillan Co.* \$1.25.

GENIUS is not hereditary, they say, but it does not follow that a modicum of talent may not be transmitted from father to son. The heredity of literary style has not yet seemed worth scientific investigation, but the reading of Justin H. McCarthy's work on the French Revolution has set us thinking, and in time we may have some valuable hypotheses to offer in regard to literary paternity and stylistic birthmarks. Possibly the marked resemblance in the literary qualities of father and son may have caused Harper & Bros. to head their little advertising leaflet with the words, "The French Revolution, by Justin H. McCarthy, M.P., Author of *A History of Our Own Times*," etc. At all events this is what they have done, and

the present reviewer, never doubting the word of such a firm, and finding the true McCarthy spirit pervading the book, found himself talking sententiously about those characteristics of the *History of Our Own Times*, which have been reproduced in *The French Revolution*. For the ridicule and ignominy resulting from this blunder he has half a mind to sue the firm, but feels that they too may have been duped by the likeness in style and may really have thought all along that Justin H. McCarthy was his own father.

In this history of the French Revolution the author enjoys great liberality in the matter of space, as will appear from the fact that the whole of the second volume deals with the brief period from the fall of the Bastille to the close of the Constituent Assembly (1789 to 1791). This gives him a good chance to be minute, and he improves it. Minuteness looks well in a history; with many it passes for learning. Learning of a certain sort it undoubtedly is, for it means the sifting of contemporary evidence, the ransacking of memoirs, and the like. All this Mr. McCarthy has done faithfully. For instance, he has evidently been at some pains to straighten out the tangled accounts of the taking of the Bastille, and he concludes, reasonably enough, that intrinsically it was a small matter, and great only because people thought it so. To reach this conclusion he quotes authorities enough to make you pity him sincerely for the amount of stuff he has had to read. He is equally circumstantial in regard to the king's attempted flight, showing the falsity of Carlyle's picturesque narrative. And there are a host of passages which might be cited in proof of his pains-taking. The book, however, is not especially thoughtful or suggestive. It will be read and liked by many, but the less they have read about the period the better they will like it. The style suffers from superfluity and from a tiresome little trick of repeating an emphatic word several times in the same sentence. It often seems as if he had thrown in alternative phrases with a view to choosing between them and had afterwards forgotten to strike one out. It may be a hereditary taint of garrulity, or it may be merely the fearful fluency of the man who can command unlimited stenographic facilities and is paid by the line.

In reading Mr. McCarthy's detailed account of the first few years of the Revolution one is constantly tormented by the question: what is the use of bothering one's head with this or that event? Space permits the author to gather facts in regard to a host of things which, whether established or not, would seem to make very little difference to any of us, for after all it does not matter much what sort of a wig the King wore when he stood at a certain window on a certain day. Of course these are little decorative bits which have their uses if ingeniously worked in. Their cumulative effort is important as giving a vivid impression of the time, but in themselves there

is a distinct limit to their value. In curious contrast to this lengthy chronicle, is Prof. George Burton Adams's *Growth of the French Nation*. The latter is an attempt to compress the essential facts of the historical development of France into a single volume of some 350 pages. Naturally the author has no leisure for historical small talk, no time for the picturesque, the epigrammatic, or the amusing. He must sum up a dynasty in a chapter and jam a century into a page. Critics often condemn this process, as, to use their stale phrase, "squeezing out the juice," but it is hard to agree as to what part of history constitutes the juice.

Some would say it is just that part which Professor Adams gives us in his book. Certainly the man with a real liking for history will be pleased with the topics chosen and the manner in treating them, for the author has a good sense of proportion and a power of compact characterization. He has made a book which will be very useful to that limited class of readers which inclines to ponder over the bearings of events. It is a work of historical interpretation, concerning itself not with details, but with the significance of critical events and the characteristic features of successive periods. As such it will seem dry and crabbed to many. It is rather a philosophical guide to the study of French history than a history in itself. Nevertheless there is a certain definiteness in its summing up of historical movements and periods that compels respect for the author, even if we disagree with his conclusions. It gives one a queer hurried feeling to be compelled to survey the entire eighteenth century in a single chapter, but when we analyze this chapter and consider what the author has omitted and what he has retained and emphasized, we are forced to admit that he has done it well. He has rendered a real service to the study of history. Whether he has done much for literature by producing this book is another question. It is not a brilliant piece of writing, but is simple, unaffected, and has the negative merit of not giving offence. Its style is such that a man who has a feeling for form as well as a regard for facts can read the book without gritting his teeth or swearing—which sounds like faint praise, but is really a high commendation for an American historical scholar in these days.

ENGLISH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL BOY LIFE IN ENGLAND.—*By John Corbin.*
16mo. *Harper & Brothers.*

THIS shrewd and cleverly written book makes very pleasant reading. Mr. Corbin knows his subject well, and handles it with freshness and clear, level-headed judgment. A personal experience of the schools on both sides of the Atlantic, combined with a vivacious style and the exercise of rigorous com-

mon sense, has enabled him to appeal successfully to two classes of readers—the American schoolboy and the American educationalist. Taking Winchester, Eton, and Rugby as fairly representative of English public schools, Mr. Corbin details their history, customs, methods of government, and influence on the character of their pupils with a sympathy and admiration which still do not make him forget that one nation's educational system may be another nation's poison. The guiding principle of English schools, as Mr. Corbin points out, is that the boys are left to govern themselves. In the larger schools they are divided into houses of a score or two, each under separate masters; in the smaller ones this arrangement is impracticable. But large or small, every school that receives boarders as well as day-boys has, for the last five hundred years, been ruled by a few carefully selected pupils, who see to it that discipline is maintained, and have authority to punish offenders without consulting the head master. The virtues of this prefectorial system are that the boys who rise to the top find their characters steadied and a spirit of self-reliance and decision developed by the obligation of ruling wisely; while the rest become learned in the prime lesson of obedience. A subsidiary result is the friendly intimacy that grows up between masters and pupils, the younger boys getting into the habit of regarding the prefects, and not the masters, as their natural enemies. But the grand benefit to England arising from this form of administration is, that from their earliest years, Englishmen are trained in the arts of government, and in an interesting parallel, which might have been prolonged further, Mr. Corbin points out that the British Empire itself is managed on a plan that is simply an extension of the public school system.

The minor features of English school-life are touched upon very sensibly. The venerable buildings, the old desks and rafters, where a boy carves his name beneath that of his great-grandfather, and the ever-present charm of antiquity inspire a regret that American boys should be without these quiet and ennobling influences. Even the peculiar and unchangeable customs of the different schools move an observer to as much admiration as merriment. Flogging, flogging, and fighting Mr. Corbin sets forth in their true light, as they appear to one with a knowledge of boys who has seen these institutions at work; not as they seem to the ordinary American, who thinks *Tom Brown* is still typical of English school-life. Mr. Corbin is free with his admiration of the intense yet temperate love of sport which the public schools of England have cultivated; and contrasts it sorrowfully with the frenzied passion for victory at any cost that still rules in American athletics. On the whole, his conclusion is that English schools do more for English boys than American schools for American boys; but while granting this, he is averse, and rightly so, to any

violent introduction of English ideas. "The entire conception of breeding and education is different in the two countries." Paternalism is the keynote of the English and freedom of the American system; and between the two there can be but little common standing ground. The division of boys into houses is all that Mr. Corbin dares to recommend; the prefectorial system he regards as too alien to the American nature to be ever successfully practiced. To us that seems a hard saying, for it implies, on Mr. Corbin's own showing, a certain disability to command or obey. But the question is too big to be threshed out in a brief review. Mr. Corbin, we must admit, chooses his ground carefully, and no doubt would defend it with spirit if called upon to do so. His book being very comprehensive and happy in its pictures of English school-life and full of suggestion in its comments thereon, has the two qualities one could most have wished for. It interests and it provokes to thought and argument.

ADVENTUROUS HUMOR

THE GREAT STONE OF SARDIS.—*By Frank R. Stockton.* 12mo. Harper & Brothers. \$1.50.
BLOWN AWAY.—*By Richard Mansfield.* 12mo.
L. C. Page & Co. \$1.25.

THE persevering persons who pride themselves on "following" serial stories through the magazines, are already familiar with Mr. Stockton's latest fantasy. For the benefit of the others, we may say that its action is supposed to pass in the year 1947, and that it has its beginning in the State of New Jersey—where, notoriously, many strange things happen. The hero constructs a submarine boat, in which employés of his triumphantly proceed to the Pole. During their absence he perfects the artesian ray, which enables him to look deep into the earth; and when another invention, an automatic shell, chances to break through its scaffolding and plough its way far under ground, he bravely follows it, discovering, not the great stone alone, but scientific truths sufficiently important to win the cordial approval of even a lady professor in Bryn Mawr college.

If the abstract seems unduly reminiscent of Jules Verne, that is because it is an abstract, and necessarily omits the quips and cranks and wanton wiles of which Mr. Stockton is always lavish. Moreover, Mr. Stockton has bettered all the conceptions of the French romancer by introducing a heroine, a rich widow, who, when the scientist's zeal for discovery seems somewhat abated, promptly marries him. It is open to the generous reader to hope, for her sake, that Roland Clewe was a handsomer man than filled the eye of Mr. Peter Newell when he made the drawings that face pages 10 and 182.

Though at first glance it suggests *Alice in Wonderland* plus an energetic nightmare, Mr. Mans-

field's story for children is, like Mr. Stockton's novel, original in details if not in the mass. The youthful heroines, Beatrice and Jessie, go farther than Mr. Stockton's characters but, on the whole, fare not much worse. Rapt away by a cyclone, in the first instance, they visit Noah's ark, Robinson Crusoe's island, and various other objects and places of interest, and their experiences with birds, beasts, and the revivified celebrities that figure in nursery classics, are truly cyclonic. The cyclone to the contrary, however, we do not gather that Beatrice and Jessie are American children. The tale as a whole is identified with transatlantic latitudes, partly by the presence of such geological phenomena as the British pun.

No one who has assisted at Mr. Mansfield's "curtain" orations needs to be reminded that the actor-author is a singularly modest and amiable man of genius. Mr. Mansfield has frequently admitted it. Naturally he describes *Blown Away* as "a nonsensical narrative, without rhyme or reason," and his preface assures us that the story "contains no sarcasm, satire or cynicism." We are not inclined to join him in depreciating his book. It is more than occasionally clever; it is almost continuously readable. On the other hand, we surmise that grown folks who buy it for the children (and themselves) will detect a certain ferocity in some of the allusions—notably those that occur in the description of the theatrical performance in Noah's ark. It is possible, however, to believe that Mr. Mansfield is not altogether responsible for this. We do not blame Mr. Stockton for his hero's unfortunate face. Why should we not be equally charitable to Mr. Mansfield and assume that it is all the fault of the cyclone?

THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

JAVA; THE GARDEN OF THE EAST.—*By Eliza Rumbab Scidmore.* 8vo. Illustrated. The Century Co. \$1.50.

WHILE one is reading Miss Scidmore's book of travels in Java, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that it is the record of a very hurried trip, which could include only the most obvious objective points of the tourist. Miss Scidmore could not be considered an authority on any Javanese subject, but she is entertaining on all. On strictly economic subjects she touches rarely, and perhaps with least success. On the "culture system," under which the Dutch colonial government practically undertook the conduct of all the agriculture of the island, she is not quite so clear as one might wish, and her conclusions that the system, abandoned on account of violent opposition and condemnation everywhere, was a good one seem to have been hastily formed. On almost everything else she is eminently readable and in-

telligent. She had no special opportunities to see more than the ordinary tourist, yet she did see very much more. There are comparatively few books on Java in English adapted to the casual reader's wants, so this volume should be welcome to those who have any curiosity about the island. For those who may be stimulated by her volume to want some more authoritative work Miss Scidmore should have added a bibliography.

In spite of its charm, Java, which has been more extravagantly praised than any other island in the world, Miss Scidmore says, is not often visited by tourists. Until recently most of the traveling had to be done by very expensive posting, and the Dutch have always discouraged foreign travel. They have disliked criticism of their governing methods, although they have never made the flimsy plea we occasionally hear now in discussion of colonial matters, that they were abroad for the benefit of the natives. Java is the richest source of Holland's wealth, more than Cuba has ever been to Spain. The Dutch administration has not been cruel nor violently oppressive, but it has been strict and selfish. Before 1864 the natives were not even allowed to study the Dutch language. Reforms have come very slowly. The colonial government enforces justice and cleanliness, even in the Chinese settlements. But it has always lagged somewhat in progress. Javanese ruins and antiquities are now being excavated and cared for, and scientific societies in Batavia are doing much in studying them. But the beginning of intelligent interest in such work was during the brief occupation of Java by the British, to whom it came from Napoleon in 1811, and by it was ceded again to the Dutch in 1816. When Sir Stamford Raffles's engineers in 1814 came to Boro Boedor, the inhabitants of the nearest village had no knowledge or tradition of the existence of this greatest temple of Buddhist art.

Excavations since that time have uncovered a pyramidal temple on a base almost as large as that of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, built in five terraces, covered with hundreds of statues, and carved into an intricate lacework of elaborate designs. It is a surprising thing for most people to realize that the ruins at Boro Boedor and Brambanan surpass in extent and magnificence anything in Egypt or India. They are relics of the Hindu empire of Java, which was founded on the ruins of a preceding Brahmanism, was in its glory during the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, and then gradually declined until the Mohammedan conquest of the fifteenth century. The native princes in some regions are still allowed to keep up a mock state, and are furnished with a large income, which they employ in arranging their pleasure gardens with electric lighting in the best style of Parisian *café-chantants* and in giving balls to the Dutch residents.

Java is preëminently an agricultural region, and is, perhaps, the richest in the world. With an area about equal to that of New York state, it supports

a constantly increasing population, amounting already to 24,000,000. From one end to the other it is a terraced garden, and except for inaccessible swamps and volcanoes there is no waste land.

Miss Scidmore had no opportunity for an intimate knowledge of the life of the inhabitants of the island, either native, Chinese, or Dutch, but she found enough that is picturesque in mere externals. The native Javanese are a quiet, graceful, and refined people, suggesting constantly the Japanese, and making one wonder how they could have revolted so often in fierce war against the Dutch rule. The Chinese in Java, in spite of all kinds of restrictions, grow very rich, and may be seen in Batavia, attired in white ducks and patent-leather boots, driving in the enormous open carriages the Dutch call "milords," with men on the box in the correct and conventional livery of Europe. Indeed, except for the Dutch, everything in Java seems picturesque, from the "Emperor" at Solo playing at royalty, to the humble thief Miss Scidmore saw being tried, who had a "dark lantern" with which he could disclose or cover the light of three or four fireflies struggling within.

The Dutch seem to gain in stolidity and lose in courtesy when they take up residence in the tropics. In the mere matter of costume they fatally prejudice a visitor against them. You may dine with charming people attired in conventional evening dress, but these same people will spend the morning and eat lunch bare-footed and in pyjamas, or short cotton skirts and loose sacques. The Dutch woman of Java is more négligée in appearance than any civilized female of whom we have ever read.

Miss Scidmore deplores constantly the lack of a Baedeker or Murray for Java. But her own book would be admirable to take on the journey to which it might easily inspire one. The volume mechanically is one of the most satisfactory of the autumn season. The pictures are numerous and good, while the binding is rich in color and unusual and appropriate in design.

THREE OPERETTAS

THREE OPERETTAS.—*By H. C. Bunner. Music by Oscar Weil. With Illustrations by G. D. Weldon and C. J. Taylor. 4to. Harper & Brothers. \$2.50.*

DURING his life the late H. C. Bunner found time to do several things besides the editing of *Puck*. With most of these literary diversions the reading public is generally familiar, but it is safe to say that he is seldom thought of as a librettist of children's operas. It is, perhaps, as a reminder of this phase of his work that these three plays have been set to music and published at this late day.

Observers of *St. Nicholas* will remember them as

appearing in that periodical some ten years ago, without music, and that at that time they were frequently used by schools and children's singing classes. The necessity of new music was avoided by the simple expedient of finding familiar airs and songs which would fit the words. This made an easy and successful combination, and the little operas consequently had considerable vogue.

This new edition brings three of the best together, with new music written for them by Mr. Oscar Weil. The first two have all the whimsicality and amusing invention, which was Bunner's greatest talent. "The Three Little Kittens of the Land of Pie" affords great opportunity for a lot of clever children, and could be made very engaging. Both dialogue and lyrics are all within easy grasp, but at the same time escape unnecessary childishness. This is the first in the work, and by all counts the best. "The Seven Old Ladies of Lavender Town" shows a less ingenuous imagination, but is nevertheless diverting. The last one, "Bobby Shaftoe," is apparently meant for older performers, possibly the amateurs of a church society. It is conventional in plot and hardly up to the other two in interest. Mr. Weil's music, while not especially inspired, is at all times suitable to the words, and frequently very graceful and pleasing. While there is no particular trace of originality, it is at all events easily learned and singable, and possessed of considerable swing. After all, children of ten and twelve do not demand originality as much as the other qualities, so the composer has done his part well enough.

FAIRY BOOKS

THE PINK FAIRY Book.—Edited by Andrew Lang. Illustrated. 8vo. Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.00.

PRINCE UNO.—16mo. Doubleday & McClure Co. Illustrated. \$1.25.

IT is a question whether it is not a waste of time to give children mere variations on the beloved old themes. As might be expected, after exhausting the primary colors, this fifth volume in Mr. Lang's prismatic series of fairy-books contains little that is new, and too many stories like "The Shirt-Collar," by Hans Andersen. The Japanese legends give a certain novelty to the collection, and it is pleasant to come again upon the Japanese "Rip van Winkle"—Urasclinnatato—which is elsewhere so beautifully given by Lafcadio Hearn. After the book is some child's property for a month, we prophesy that it will open of itself at the Danish tale of "Esben and the Witch," which has the touch of true romance. That so many of the others lack it, anyone will note who has ever complied with the difficult request, "Tell me a story." So much goes to make success: briskness, buoyancy, faith, the dramatic thrill. If your tale lack these,

be your princess as beautiful as the day, and her apparel thick with glittering gems—your audience will run away to play. The fault, however, is not Mr. Lang's, and it is no wonder he desires to keep the affection of the only reading-public worth having. Mr. Ford's smaller illustrations are excellent.

After Lilliput and Hawthorne's pygmies, a child will find little to interest him in *Prince Uno*, whose author adopts the style of Mr. W. D. Howells. The fairies live at "Weeboro!" After that one is not surprised to find them the dullest sprites imaginable. As for the human being whose adventures among them form the subject of the story, his dense stupidity and irritating ill-faith can only be shown by quoting such contemptible reflections as—"The Prince seemed to be immensely rich, and to think very little of expense—I could not doubt that the silver was real silver, and the gold, real gold!" Let the author watch and pray, and practice on some simpler form of literature—the epic poem, for instance. Meanwhile a thorough course of "Alice" would do much, if it only left him despairing! The pictures in this little book deserve a more imaginative text; they bring remembrances of "Dicky Doyle's" inimitable fays. Perhaps these, if nothing else, will serve to bridge that dreadful gulf of childhood—"I have nothing to do!"

A BOOK FOR BOYS

A HERO IN HOMESPUN.—By William E. Barton. 12mo. Lamson, Wolff & Co. \$1.50.

IF OF an uncharitable and suspicious disposition one might reasonably expect from this alliterative title a melodrama with leanings towards the dime novel, suffering from that malign influence which the lives of Kit Carson and Daniel Boone have exerted upon our fiction; and however generous by nature, one would hardly hope at most for more than an amiable and colorless story for boys. How false the first judgment would be is indicated by the fact that while there is a hero in homespun there is no villain of any sort; and the injustice of the second characterization will be equally apparent to anyone who, mastering his prejudice, reads the book. To be brief, this is an extremely well written and deserving story of the Civil War, the result of painstaking study, judicious selection, and not a little narrative power.

It may fairly be called a book for boys rather than a novel; the thread of love is followed perfunctorily and with long interruptions, the women are drawn with no more distinctness than is usually allotted to minor characters, and the story is quite lacking in the subtle analysis and subjective grasp of emotion which in recent war tales there has been such formidable and distorted effort to compass. It is the account of the vivid experiences of a Tennes-

see mountaineer who joins the Union forces, serves throughout the War in the Army of the Cumberland, and rises in the end to no higher rank than that of captain—rare restraint on the author's part! The attempt has been less to depict the man than the scenes and the spirit of the times, and while the story itself appeals to that interest in adventure supposed to be strongest in the young, it ought, as an intelligent commentary on military operations and as a picture, graphic and excellent in perspective, not only of battles, marches, and encampments, but of men known to history—like General Nelson and "Parson" Brownlow—to have a claim upon the attention of discriminating readers. The author's method is liberal; his story is diffusely told, but with that diffuseness which comes from really rich knowledge, and which is so easy and intimate that it charms rather than annoys. Chapters are given over to men who are a part of history, but who are not essential to the story, pauses are made for anecdotes which might come from an old soldier's reminiscences; and one does not resent the delays.

Not an important work of art, certainly, but a broad, healthy story, which has information and humor and life.

YARNS OF THE SEA

YANKEE SHIPS AND YANKEE SAILORS.—By James Barnes. Crown 8vo. The Macmillan Company. \$1.50.

MR. JAMES BARNES, whose standing as a writer of seafaring books is very well known, has brought together in *Yankee Ships and Yankee Sailors*, a selection from the best yarns known to the story of the American navy. Though they have been told and retold on the forecastle and the quarter-deck, and by a variety of writers ever since the days of 1812, of which they treat, they are so stirring, and the events were of such great moment in the history of the nation, that it is fair to say that with each repetition they have gained interest. And as for the version of them which Mr. Barnes has given, it must be said that he not only adds to the life in them as they have been told hitherto, but he has given several of them an entirely new interest—the interest due to novelty or news.

One must see the author's preface before reading this book in order to fully understand the work, for he says he "has touched the fragile bric-a-brac of tradition with the feather-duster of investigation" only. It is not pretended that all that is here told is literally true—that all orders were given as here printed, or that all conversations were held as here repeated. "Facts are not lacking to prove much here to be true," he says; and then he adds the very important statement that "it will not confuse our historical knowledge to accept it thus."

A more remarkable statement than that last would be hard to find outside the works of the complacent British naval historians; for in at least five of the chapters of this book, if the version given by Mr. Barnes is true, then all other versions, from Cooper's to Maclay's, including that of the careful Roosevelt, not to mention lesser lights, are entirely wrong. And the yarns relate to matters, too, of the utmost importance in the history of the American navy, and not to the mere adventures of some rollicking Jack ashore.

Take for a sample the yarn of "Allen of the Chesapeake." The American whose blood is not stirred by the story of the *Chesapeake* and the *Leopard* is a cur who ought to emigrate. Mr. Barnes re-tells this in spirited fashion, but he says that Barron did not haul down the flag until after Allen, with the famed live coal from the galley, had fired a gun. All others say the flag was already at the rail. If Mr. Barnes is right, Mr. Barron is in a great measure rehabilitated.

And then there is the story of the Irishman who deserted a British frigate and swam to the *Constitution* while she was at anchor in a British port. How Lieutenant Morris held on to the man until Hull returned from London, although two British frigates anchored where it was supposed the *Constitution* could not get away without fouling one of them; how Morris got her away, nevertheless, only to have them repeat their tactics at the new anchorage; how Hull returned and carried the *Constitution* and the man to sea with the two frigates in chase—in chase with their crews at quarters; how, when at sea, Hull waited until the only one that could keep up was alongside—waited while his crew made the side tackles sing as they brought their guns to bear on the British; how the British commander then tucked his spanker close against the mizzen, as a kicked whiffet tucks her tail against her hind legs, and sneaked—that is one of the bulliest stories ever told of old Ironside. We hope we may be allowed the use of the only adjective equal to the occasion. But Mr. Barnes says that (p. 67) the two vessels did not make "a movement to prevent her going."

More important still is the yarn of Dartmoor prison. According to Mr. Barnes, the Americans were digging through a wall, and one had got his head and shoulders through the hole, when a sentry opened fire and called the other guards to come and fire. So the Americans, according to Barnes, were shot while trying to escape. All other writers, including two who were on the spot, say that no hole was dug through the wall, and no attempt was made to dig through. Moreover, such digging as was done ceased at the second order of the sentry. Several hours later, the Governor of the prison, angered because the prisoners had refused to agree with him about an allowance of food, did, when all was quiet in the yard, deliberately order his guards to open fire, whereby a number were killed and

wounded. And that, too, six weeks after the treaty of peace had been ratified on both sides of the water, and so murder was committed in most brutal fashion. If it does not confuse our historical knowledge to accept the yarn of Mr. Barnes as truth, what does it do?

The reader will observe that we do not attempt to decide as to the relative trustworthiness of Mr. Barnes and the great number of writers who are against him in these important matters. Our reason for this is that Mr. Barnes has said in print, beginning with his *Naval Engagements of 1812* and ending with his *Biography of Commodore Bainbridge*, that he is a lineal descendant of Bainbridge, and that "this circumstance readily suggests the exceptional opportunities at the author's command in the way of unpublished letters and papers, and in personal knowledge." Nor is that all, for he has been diligent in letting people know that he has "a special collection" of naval works and things. The impropriety of deciding against a lineal descendant of a great naval officer—a descendant with exceptional opportunities, personal knowledge, and a special collection—must be obvious. But, with due apologies, we beg to say that since Mr. Barnes has set out to alter the face of history, as he has done (we apologize once more) in this work, it is incumbent on him to do, what he has not yet done, to give us something from his unpublished papers and exceptional opportunities and special collection—at least some proof of what he appears to have written out of his personal knowledge only.

GIFT BOOKS NEW AND OLD

LONDON AS SEEN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON.—
Folio. *Charles Scribner's Sons.* \$5.00.

AN ALPHABET.—By *William Nicholson*. 4to. *R. H. Russell.* \$1.50.

AN ALMANAC OF TWELVE SPORTS FOR 1898.—By *William Nicholson*. 4to. *R. H. Russell.* \$1.25.

MOTHER GOOSE IN PROSE.—By *L. Frank Baum*.
Pictures by Maxfield Parrish. 4to. *Way & Williams.* \$2.00.

IT is a happy thing for the public that the gorgeous gift-books of a decade ago are now nearly out-lived and the gaudy glory of frosted churchyards will soon be missed from our book-shop windows. Instructors in art have condemned the things; itinerant "professors" throughout the West have held them unworthy your serious love. The days are passed when "Printed in Nuremberg" was guaranty of all that was fine in Christmas art.

In a way, it is very sad. The sending of gift-books was always among the agreeablest ways of wounding a friend. Now we shall have to look for new devices.

In the place of the holiday lambs and the verses, and all the fringed delights, another and a novel kind of holiday book has appeared—the Gibson book, and all that admirable series of picture volumes which its success inspired.

The new Gibson book, *London as Seen by Charles Dana Gibson*, is in the same style as its predecessors. It is distinct, however, in having short notes of the artist's impressions which, while quite unpretentious, are suggestive and clever. Often by a phrase he hits off some striking feature of life. While the pictures are in some respects more interesting than those in either of the previous volumes, it does not occur to one that they are profoundly characteristic, and Mr. Gibson certainly did not choose an attractive type. Yet these facts make small difference. The presentation pictures are very charming and the book is excellent for a Christmas gift.

The two books by Mr. William Nicholson introduce to America a man who is in a fair way to occupy a leading place among artists of the new school. For several years the posters of the Beggarstaff Brothers have been well known and much praised. It is only within the year, however, that one of the brothers, resuming his own name, has done smaller work. The portrait of the Queen, issued as a supplement to *The New Review* in the early part of this summer, at once attracted the widest attention, both for the novelty of its execution, the remarkable life-likeness, and what appeared to many persons as brutal frankness. The picture was a success, and on the strength of it Mr. Nicholson has done a series of portraits, which, we understand, are later to be published in a portfolio. In the meantime, we have two volumes—an almanac of twelve sports and an alphabet. The prints are in two colors and done in a primitive wood-cut style. It is difficult, however, to overrate the great cleverness of the work. Mr. Nicholson is certain of himself, and his lines are marvellously expressive. For the almanac Mr. Kipling has contributed a series of verses, many of which are as admirable as the drawings they accompany.

Mr. L. Frank Baum has undertaken to expand *Mother Goose* into little stories for children. The thing has been done before, but these tales are nevertheless pleasant enough reading. They are always harmless, sometimes ingenious, and occasionally humorous. Their chief merit is of course that they have furnished Mr. Maxfield Parrish with an excuse for making a great many pictures. The combination forms one of the most attractive books we have seen in a long time. Mr. Parrish has a new style, and one quite his own. It has existed for more than a year now, and we do not remember to have seen any attempt at imitation. He has an admirable sense of decorative qualities, a good vein of humor, and a peculiarly delicate and indefinable charm. His pictures in this book call for nothing but praise.

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THE CHAP-BOOK for 1898.

Notes.

This department will be continued, and since it has proved unceasingly interesting to the magazine readers, it will usually be somewhat larger than it has been in the past. In political matters THE CHAP-BOOK has no affiliations and will endeavor to apply here the same standards of ordinary common sense that it hopes to use in its literary judgments. There will be the usual comment on literary matters. The dramatic notes will criticize all the really important plays in England and America, and the subscribers will be kept informed of all really notable happenings in the world of letters and art. THE CHAP-BOOK Notes can promise to be independent; they hope to be always amusing.

Fiction.

There will always be short stories, not only by well-known authors but by entirely new writers. THE CHAP-BOOK is anxious to encourage anything that is new and well done, and its constant hope is to furnish its readers with really good fiction and to keep them in touch with the newest as well as the best forms of art.

Literary Essays and Articles.

Each issue will contain a number of such articles. During the year a new series of *Letters to Dead Authors* by ANDREW LANG will appear. Page causeries by various clever writers have been secured to appear at stated intervals. Appreciations of new writers and new appreciations of old writers will be found from time to time.

Poetry.

THE CHAP-BOOK probably gives more space to verse than any other literary magazine.

Reviews of New Books.

This department, which was started not quite a year ago, has proved most successful. THE CHAP-BOOK does not undertake to review all the books sent to it, but any one who follows the review department will be informed as to all the books which deserve his attention or are likely to interest him. It will be the endeavor of the editors to make the reviews, which come from many hands, both sane and entertaining. THE CHAP-BOOK has no desire to "slash" books indiscriminately, but it wishes to protest against the fulsome, ill-advised, and widespread praise of mediocre and bad work which is to be found in so many critical journals. It hopes to praise the good books, and only those.

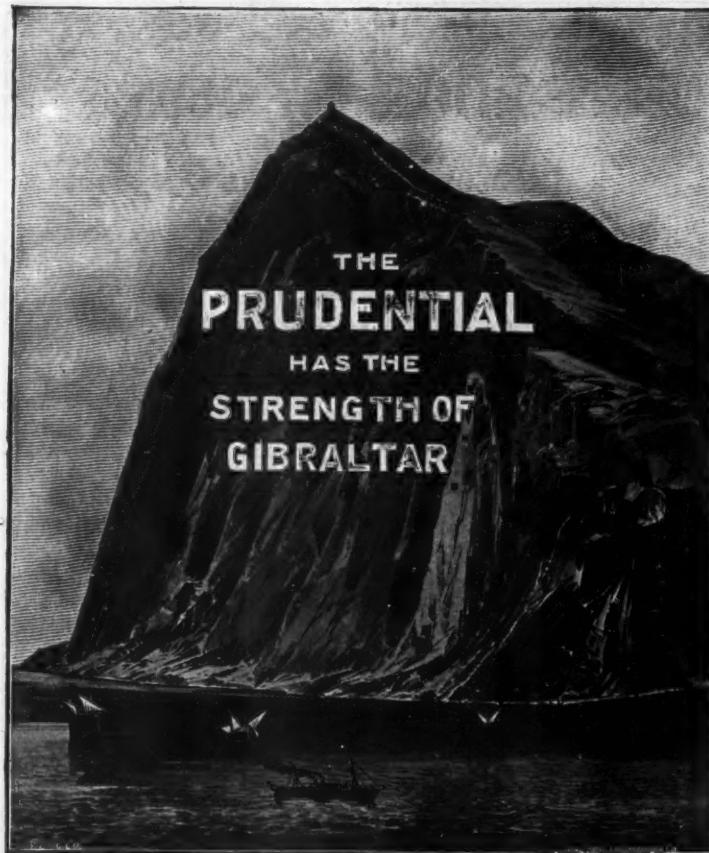
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